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L'Arlésienne.



"World Classics."

L'Arlésienne

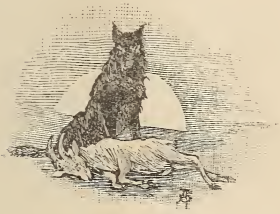
(THE GIRL OF ARLES)

BY

ALPHONSE DAUDET

Odi et amo. Quomodo id faciam, fortasse requiris
Nescio. Sed fieri sentio et excrucior.

Illustrations by Gambard and Marold.



BOSTON
JOSEPH KNIGHT COMPANY
M DCCC XCIV

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University Press
John Wilson and Son, Cambridge
U. S. A.

TO

MY DEAR AND NOBLE BIZET.

INTRODUCTION.

TWO or three vignettes from the life of its author may fittingly serve as a prelude to "L'Arlésienne," that tragic idyl which he so greatly loved. Fortunately the career of Alphonse Daudet is not yet finished; and he has but a little way passed the bounds of middle life. His biography, therefore, is not yet written. May the years be many before this work can be done!

The family of Daudet originated in the savage fastnesses of the

Cevennes Mountains, whence, at the time of the French Revolution, two brothers of that name descended to the city of Nismes. One of these, Claude, soon perished in the massacres of the Bagarre; the other, Jacques, escaped this fate almost by a miracle, and in time became a prosperous merchant. His son Vincent, the father of Alphonse Daudet, good Catholic and Royalist, travelled through Normandy, Brittany, and La Vendée, with wagon-loads of goods from the paternal store, which he sold to the merchants of the provincial cities. In 1830 this far-travelled trader in silks married Adeline Reynaud, the daughter of a rich and powerful family from the mountains of L'Ardèche, at that time prominent in the mercantile life of Nismes. The first son resulting from this marriage

was Henri Daudet, who died at the age of twenty-four, while holding a professorship; the second son was Ernest Daudet, whose charming book "Mon Frère et Moi" gives so many interesting details of the family history; and the third son, born May 13, 1840, was Alphonse Daudet. The happy and prosperous family dwelt in the old Sabran house, opposite the Church of St. Charles, and near the famous Enclos de Rey; and here the children enjoyed a thousand merry games, and developed amain. The story of his early life Alphonse has told with charming pathos in "Le Petit Chose," much of which was written in 1866, in a great lonely country-house, near the Rhone, amid mulberry and olive trees and vineyards, in the melancholy quiet of the great Southern plains.

Alphonse received his first instruction from the Brothers of the Christian Doctrine. The fortunes of the Daudet family were ruined in 1848; and yet Vincent insisted upon keeping his lads at school, however much others opposed it. Under the pressure of enforced economy the family gave up its town house, and settled in the factory, now silent and empty. This strange habitation is described by Alphonse in the first chapter of "Petit Chose." In 1849 the Daudets moved to Lyons; and Ernest and Alphonse became choristers in the Church of St. Pierre. After a time they were sent to the great school of the Lyceum, where Alphonse usually evaded more than half of his classes, yet attracted the admiration of the professors on account of his compositions, which were mainly in verse.

In a thousand adventures, in canoeing on the Saône, in rambles among the green fields, in evenings spent at the wine-shops, he unconsciously stored up material for future literary studies. The foggy and dispiriting atmosphere of Lyons, and the adversities which befell the family there, gave a gloomy coloring to these years, which formed a period of mournful exile.

At the age of ten Alphonse was permeated with a mania for observation and analysis, and a desire to incarnate himself in other beings. His chief amusement was in following this or that passer-by for hours, observing his strollings or his occupations, and trying to enter into his thoughts. But once, when he thus followed a gorgeous woman in brilliant attire to the door of a house of revelry, his parents for-

bade any more of these wandering studies.

The books most earnestly read and re-read by the Daudet children were "Robinson Crusoe," "The Swiss Family Robinson," and a series of ten volumes of stories entitled, "Journal des Enfants." A little later they revelled in the works of Victor Hugo, Eugène Sue, Ariosto, Shakespeare, Boccaccio, Lamartine, and Chateaubriand.

In his thirteenth year Alphonse entered upon a diabolic phase, moved by an irrepressible yearning to see life, and to broaden his horizons. Neglecting school, he spent his days on the river, rowing madly about in sunshine or in rain, with a pipe and a bottle as his only comrades, — a bold, violent, inquisitive spirit, eager for pranks and adventures. Almost every day he had to

seek a fresh excuse for his truancy. Once he said: "Dear mother, I stayed from school to-day because I had heard that the Pope was dead." The mother and her sister, both earnest Catholics, burst into tears, and rejoiced so greatly to hear that the news was false, the next day, that they freely forgave Alphonse the invention of the lie.

At the age of sixteen Alphonse became an usher in the College of Alais, in the south of France, and painfully earned his daily bread amid rough little lads from the Cevennes, and bigoted and pedantic teachers. His life in this gloomy abode, remote in the country of pits and furnaces, was harsh and humiliating; but he gained therein the discipline which carried him through the first struggling years of his literary novitiate.

At last the youth determined to end the miseries of his uncongenial life by seeking his fortune in great Paris, which, like London and New York, attracts myriads of ambitious provincials, to crown the fortunate, and to drown the others. When he had paid for his railway ticket, he had but forty sous left in the world; and this poor pittance he held tightly to, although he had nothing to eat during the eight and forty hours of the journey. Arrayed in a light summer suit, he shivered through the long and bitterly cold days and nights of the transit, crowded into a third-class compartment with a band of uproarious sailors. In the chilling darkness of an early morning in November, 1857, cramped, exhausted, half-frozen, half-starved, Alphonse first entered Paris, and walked through the slumbering

streets and across the misty Seine, to the Latin Quarter, following the handcart which bore his poor little patched and battered trunk. Ernest Daudet, then in receipt of a salary of fifteen dollars a month from an ancient noble who was dictating his memoirs, took his brother to share with him a tiny garret, near the Odéon. The view from the windows included only chimneys and roofs, and the gloomy round towers of St. Sulpice. The house was filled with noisy Gascon students, among whom the eloquent and magnetic young Gambetta reigned supreme. Alphonse had devoted his future, with an absolute consecration, to literature. When he could afford to buy a candle, he would sit up all night, covering innumerable sheets of paper with verses, outlines of dramas, and sketches of life as he

had seen it. During the day he wandered dreamily through the wonderful panoramic streets, observing the marble queens in the Luxembourg gardens, the temple front of the Odéon theatre, the bright cafés of the Boulevard St. Michel, the classic courts of the Sorbonne, the splendors of the Tuileries, and the Rue de Rivoli. Often he would bring home a few pounds of bread and sausage, and then lie in bed for three days, musing and pondering. He had no money to buy books, but Madame Gaut allowed him to look over the new works in her bookstore, on condition that he did not cut the leaves. It was the keenest joy for the youth to see, or perchance to have a few words of conversation with, Barbey d'Aurevilly, or Vallès, or Planche, or Cressot, or some other master in literature.

After a year of this strange life, wandering and dreaming, and lured onward by an inextinguishable hope and confidence, Daudet found that he had prepared poems enough to make up a thin volume. This mournful little packet of manuscript he carried successively to Lévy, Hachette, and the other publishers, stealing in and out of their vast offices, and frightened at the creaking of his own boots. But the men of books were never in — for him. After a while, he was allowed to write an article for the legitimist paper, the "Spectateur." He drolly describes the affection and tender care which he lavished upon this, his very first article, and what scrupulous attention he gave even to its penmanship. It was accepted, and sent to the printers; but just then the Orsini plot against Napoleon turned

Paris upside down, the "Spectateur" was suppressed, and Daudet's article never appeared.

Behold, now, a situation of alarming gravity, and advancing terrible suggestions. In the threadbare shabbiness of penury, enfeebled by the hunger and exposure of a twelvemonth, oppressed by the knowledge of his near-sightedness, awkwardness, and timidity, almost without friends, and apparently a failure in his chosen profession, the raw provincial lad mournfully contemplated the duty of suicide. A little brazier of fuming charcoal in that cheerless garret, or a quiet slipping under the waters of the Seine, would release him from the pangs of poverty and chagrin. How vast, then, would have been the loss to France and to modern literature! But, as he pathetically remarks in his memoirs,

"Heaven kindly took pity on my woes;" and a publisher of the Latin Quarter brought out a handsome rose-tinted edition of his virginal poems, "Les Amoureuses," which the critics commended as excellent. Now no longer an unknown attic scribbler, he felt himself a poet, printed and shown for sale in the shop-windows, and expecting the busy people in the streets to turn around and look at him. It should be remembered that the poems were published only upon the payment of a thousand francs, which Ernest borrowed for the purpose; and that the book resulted in a decided financial loss.

The lad was now only eighteen years old, but he had a sagacious and trusted mentor in his brother Ernest. When, therefore, this man of experience remarked to him:

"One must have a dress-coat if he wishes to make his way in the world," Alphonse found a confiding tailor, who sent to his lofty nook of a chamber, wrapped in shiny green calico, a marvel of sartorial art, with the most modish of collars, the slimmest of swallow-tails. Thus arrayed, he attended the *soirée* of Augustine Brohan, the famous actress, where he was on all sides mistaken for a Wallachian prince then in Paris. Scared by the splendor of the company and the hubbub of the talking, and awkwardly failing in the quadrille, the anxious poet took refuge in the buffet, where his wretched coat-tails quickly swept from the table a pyramid of crystal glasses and decanters. He fled from the house like a culprit, and spent half the night wandering and shivering in the snowy

streets. What he quaintly calls "the longing to show off my coat" led the gentle poet to many other and more fortunate evenings, to the salons of Mesdames Ancelot, and Waldor, and Loudun, and others, among Sorbonne professors, Voltairian fabulists, dramatists, composers, actresses, artists, romanticists, and many other singular and picturesque characters.

By a fortunate incident the young writer was brought under the favorable notice of the Comte de Morny, President of the Corps législatif; and from this powerful personage he received an appointment under the government. "I am a Legitimist," he answered proudly to M. de Morny, when he offered him this sinecure under the Empire; but the liberal-minded statesman turned aside the damaging avowal with a

bon mot, and installed his young favorite in the desired office, where he served for five years. "Have whatever political opinions you like, only you must cut your hair," said the practical old noble; and so the young private secretary tried to conform to his new conditions. He had little real work to do, except to skim over the latest books and reviews, and inform his patron what was worth reading. Here he often saw the banished Bourbon and German princes and other august refugees, whom he has portrayed so vividly in "Les Rois en Exil."

In these days of his youth, Daudet was thus described, by Théodore de Banville, in "Camées Parisiens": "A head marvellously charming; the skin of a warm pallor, and the color of amber, the eye-brows straight and silky; the eye flashing,

drowning, at the same time humid and burning; the mouth voluptuous, dreamy, purpled with blood; the beard sweet and infantine, abundant brown hair, and small and delicate ears, — combined to form an appearance proudly masculine, notwithstanding its feminine grace."

The life and climate of Paris at an early date developed in this child of the sunny South a threatening disease of the lungs, for whose relief he was compelled, in 1861, to winter in Algiers. He was ordered to take absolute rest, and great quantities of cod-liver oil. The latter part of the prescription he followed, but his rest he found in journeys in the provinces, visits to Arab chiefs, and adventurous rides across the mountains. His published works indicate how keenly the gentle invalid enjoyed the musky bazaars of Algiers,

the orange-groves of Blidah, the fig-orchards of Milianah, the oleanders of Chélif. The following winter, also, he escaped from the fogs and mud of Paris, and dwelt in Corsica; and in 1863 he passed the months of danger among the roses of Provence.

In the summer of 1866, while visiting his brother Ernest at Ville-d'Avray, Daudet first saw the charming young girl whom a few months later he made his wife. She was the daughter of refined and cultivated parents, and had grown up in an atmosphere of tenderness and poesy, and amid the advantages of a high and careful education. Madame Daudet has been of the utmost service to her husband, as comrade and as co-laborer. As he has written: "She has taken such a part in all I have written. Not a page she

has not looked over, or touched up, on which she has not thrown a dash of her fine azure and gold-dust. And withal so modest, so simple, so little of a blue-stocking." The author rendered homage to her tender and indefatigable aid in the dedication of the "Nabab;" but she would not allow this tribute to be printed.

Far down in the south of France stands the ancient farmhouse of Montauban; on the pine-clad hill above it the long arms of a deserted windmill idly beat the air. Hitherward often came Daudet, when he felt the need of forgetting the fevered life of Paris, and putting himself in touch with kindly Nature. He was always a welcome guest at Montauban, which was inhabited by a venerable matron and her four sons, who, on account of their professions, bore the names of the

Notary, the Mayor, the Consul, and the Lawyer. In the crumbling windmill the author spent many happy days, remembering, dreaming, and planning, while the tramontana whistled through the gray mountain-grasses. Thence he would make excursions with a little group of Provençal poets to the forum of Arles, thronged with shepherds; the mountain-walled Maillane, where Mistral dwelt; the rocky heights of the Ville des Baux, from which the pure, bright blue of the sea may be seen; and the ramparts and palaces of Avignon, whose golden pontifical wine brought inspiration. From these charming experiences grew the first series of "Lettres de Mon Moulin," in 1866, and also the second series, which were written in the studio of Eugène Delacroix, at Champrosay. The "Lettres," al-

though failing of the great success of his other works, have always been the favorite book of their author, since they recall the happiest days of his youth, amid joy and friendship and poetry.

On his route to Algeria Daudet passed through the tiny Provençal town of Tarascon, which suggested the name of his immortal "Tartarin of Tarascon," published in 1869, and enriched with drolleries from his African tour. The townsmen have ever since hated the author with true Southern scorn, breathing out threats of vengeance and retribution. The story of Tartarin was commenced as a serial in the "Petit Moniteur;" but the readers failed to appreciate its delicate irony, and the continuation of the work was transferred to "Figaro," where it met with great disparagement. But

when it came out in book form, the success of this madcap creation was immense; and Tartarin became one of the world's heroes of fiction. "Tartarin sur les Alpes," published in 1886, carried the Provençal hero into new regions, and with great success.

During the siege of Paris Daudet served as a volunteer in the Ninety-sixth Regiment of the National Guard, fought at Buzenval, slept in the straw of cattle-trucks, or on the open ground, stood under arms on the advanced posts, and braved deadly perils, in order to observe, to comprehend, to attain the inner meaning of the vast and terrible panorama of war. During these days of beleaguerment and sorties he filled his notebooks with countless memoranda of impressions, experiences, and visions, and amassed

the material for exquisite future works, such as "The Siege of Berlin" and "La Dernière Classe," those incomparable stories of militarism and patriotism. Very thrilling also is his story of the vigils of the battalions of the Marais, with which he served during the battle of Champigny. It was indeed the soul-stirring events of the war that seemed to kindle the genius of the poet and essayist into a white flame; and after the battle-flags were furled, and the German drums ceased to throb along the valley of the Seine, began the growth of Daudet into one of the greatest of living novelists.

"Fromont Jeune et Risler Ainé," probably the most widely read of Daudet's novels, was planned, during the rehearsals of "L'Arlésienne," for a drama of Parisian life. The plan was to illustrate the perils of

commercial life and collaboration; but the character and passions of Sidonie were so skilfully drawn that the main purpose has always been lost sight of, to the great chagrin of the author. In one of his brilliant little histories of his books Daudet has given details as to the actual personages from whom all the characters in "Fromont" were drawn, and the localities which were studied for the scenes. The novel was published serially in the "Bien Public," and then in book form, and immediately scored a tremendous success, with many successive editions, and German, Spanish, Italian, Swedish, Danish, English, and American translations.

"L'Arlésienne," one of the most exquisite of Daudet's shorter works, is an impassioned fairy-tale of Southern France, — a drama of

love, whose scene was a farm on the plains of the Camargue. It was presented magnificently at the Vaudeville Theatre, with profusion of silk and velvet, and with ancient carols and antique marches, in the delightful music of the composer Bizet. Yet it failed of success as a theatrical production, because Paris, volatile, self-centred, egotistical, had no regard for the simple beauty of this provincial pastoral.

One of the most interesting assemblages of the modern literary world was found in the monthly meetings called "the Flaubert dinner," or "the dinner of unsuccessful authors," which were held in various Parisian restaurants, and usually lasted from seven o'clock until two or three of the morning. They were reserved for masters in literature who had produced one or more works which

failed; and these merry brethren in misfortune included only Tourguéneff, Flaubert, Goncourt, Zola, and Daudet. The engaging manners of the last-named, which have won for him the title of "the lion-tamer," went far toward keeping peace in these feasts of the Titans.

It is the custom of the author to relate his books aloud, while mentally evolving them, thus imbuing himself more thoroughly with them, and at the same time elucidating them, and receiving new ideas from the effect made upon the listeners. Every one who visits his study, or rambles with him in the country, or drifts with him in a boat down the placid Seine, is overwhelmed with these torrents of improvisation, and becomes a silent collaborator. More than all others, his wife has been the victim of these superabundant

declamations, at all hours of the day, and under all circumstances.

The author thus describes his method of work: "All my notes being jotted down, my chapters in good order and well divided, my personages thoroughly alive in my mind, I begin to work quickly and rapidly. I dash down ideas and events without allowing myself time for proper or exact wording even, the subject hurrying me on, swamping both details and characters. The page covered, I hand it to my collaborator. I look over it again afterwards; then at last I recopy it, —and with what joy! the joy of a school-boy who has finished his task, —touching up some phrases, completing, refining them; it is the best period of work. . . . At the two ends of the long room stood my long table and my wife's writing-

desk, and running to and fro, carrying the sheets from one to the other, my son, then a child, with thick fair locks falling over his little pinafore."

His work has always been done in the most desultory way, and usually only under the pressure of financial need. For months upon months he remains idle, devoting his time to cafés, receptions, and rural journeyings; and then again he will absolutely disappear from view, burying himself in his library, and writing with intense eagerness, night and day. He says that he often sends in the first two or three chapters of a new novel which is to be published serially, before any other chapters are ready, so that by their being printed he shall be compelled to break away from the lazzaronism of his race, and get hard at work.

Daudet has always been a close and patient student of nature. His memoranda and notebooks include passing thoughts, observations, outlines, names, scenes, suggestions, and a vast amount of other material for future works. His characters are drawn upon reminiscences of people whom he has known and studied. The "Nabab" is almost a photograph; so are "Numa Roumestan," the "Kings in Exile," "L'Évangéliste," "Sapho," "Fromont," "Jack," and the other creations of Daudet's genius.

The physical characteristics of Daudet are such as to attract attention. He is slim in figure, and rather under the average size; and the great head which dominates the body is made even more noticeable by the luxuriant masses of raven hair which fall over his brow and

shoulders. His bronzed complexion and scanty silky beard give his face a strange Moorish expression, so that Regnault use to call him "the Arabian Christ." It is said that he does not venture even to sleep without an eye-glass inserted in the cavity of his eye. Near-sightedness is still one of his greatest trials, next to rheumatism. Once he followed a priest a long way through the streets, under the impression that it was a widow with whom he was in love. At another time, at the Jardin des Plantes, he pelted a fur-clad gentleman with bread, under the impression that he was a bear. Many very droll stories and practical jokes are narrated in this connection; and only the unwearying kindliness and generosity of Daudet could have endured so much rude fun.

The wonderful exuberance of spirits which characterizes Daudet is strangely offset by a profound love of solitude and wild nature. He claims that at times he has to atone by a fast of words, a long abstinence from talk and gesticulation, for the excesses in these directions which are characteristic of a Southerner. It was in search of the desired silence and solitude that he went so often to his Provençal windmill, or moored his boat in a hidden cove of the Île des Moineaux, or secluded himself in a remote and unvisited lighthouse.

France knows no higher name today, in her Pantheon of fame, than that of Alphonse Daudet. As landmarks of his development from crude provincialism to such lofty mastery, it is interesting to read his autobiographical essays; of

his friendships with Villemessant, Rochefort, and other notables; of his tireless and widespread searches for the material of unfamiliar details in his novels. We see him ministering tenderly to his consumptive neighbor, whom he has drawn in the character of "Jack;" or floating in his book "L'Arlésienne" along the lovely upper Seine; or writing feverishly, in the old Henri II. palace in the Marais; or observing the Bohemian orgies in the Brasserie of the Martyrs; or mingling with the great world at the receptions of Madame Adam and other celebrities; or listening to the Tzigane orchestra, thrilled with his impassioned love of music; or bending enwrapt over the pages of Charles Dickens and Fenimore Cooper; or standing picket, rifle in hand, under the roaring batteries of Mont Valé-

rien; or hunting lions on the borders of Sahara; or dreaming over the adventures of "La Belle Nivernaise;" in short, travelling everywhere, mingling with all classes of people, seeking extraordinary adventures, winning almost unparalleled honors, and with his Southern joyousness and Parisian brilliancy uniting an iron diligence in the pursuit of his noble profession.

M. F. SWEETSER.

Personages.

Balthazar.	A Serving-man.
Frédéri.	Rose Mamaï.
Cockswain Marc.	Renaude.
Francet Mamaï.	The Innocent.
Mitifio.	Vivette.
The Crew.	A Serving-woman.

Played for the first time at the Théâtre du Vaudeville in 1872 without success; revived at the Odéon, May 5, 1885, under the intelligent and artistic direction of M. Porel, and played two hundred times.

First Tableau.

THE FARM OF CASTELET.

A COURTYARD opening through a wide-barred gate in the background to a highroad bordered with large dusty trees, beyond which is seen the Rhone.

To left, the farmhouse with a wing of the main building turning along the background. It is a fine house of its kind, — manorial of aspect, entered from the outside by stone steps with a railing of old wrought-iron. The wing towards the back is surmounted by a turret, used as a hay-loft, and entered at the very top, under the eaves, through a dormer-window; the window has a pulley and trusses of hay protruding.

Below this wing is the cellar, with an arched door.

To right of the courtyard are the offices and farm-buildings, sheds and coach-houses; a little in front of them the well, — a well with a low curb, capped with white stone-work, and overrun by a wild grape-vine.

Here and there in the courtyard a plough, a harrow, a large cart-wheel, etc.



SCENE I.

FRANCET MAMAÏ; BALTHAZAR; THE INNOCENT; *presently* ROSE MAMAÏ.

[*The shepherd Balthazar is sitting, a pipe in his mouth, on the coping of the well. The Innocent, on the ground, lays his head on the shepherd's knee. Francet Mamaï stands in front of them, a bunch of keys in one hand, in the other a large basket with bottles.*]

FRANCET MAMAÏ. Hey! hey! old Balthazar, what do you say to that? There 's a bit of news for Castelet!

BALTHAZAR (*behind his pipe*). I 'm thinking —

FRANCET MAMAÏ (*lowering his voice and glancing at the farm-house*). No, listen. Rose does n't wish to tell you till it 's all settled, but I can't help that; there ought n't to be any secrets between you and me —

THE INNOCENT (*in a fretful voice, and rambling in mind*). Say, shepherd —

FRANCET MAMAÏ. — and besides, you understand, in an affair of this kind I 'm not sorry to get the advice of an old comrade.

THE INNOCENT. Say, shepherd, what did the wolf do to Monsieur Seguin's goat?

FRANCET MAMAÏ. There, there! my Innocent, there! Balthazar will finish his story presently. Here, play with the keys. [*The Innocent*

clutches the bunch and rattles it, laughing. Francet goes nearer to the shepherd.] Now, positively, old man, what do you think of this marriage?

BALTHAZAR. What do you expect me to think, my poor Francet? In the first place, it is your idea and that of your daughter-in-law; so it is mine too, whether I will or no.

FRANCET MAMAÏ. How's that, — whether you will or no?

BALTHAZAR (*sententiously*). When the masters fiddle the servants dance.

FRANCET MAMAÏ (*smiling*). Well, you don't look much like dancing. [*Sitting down on his basket.*] Come, let's hear what the trouble is. You don't like the business, evidently.

BALTHAZAR. Well, no! there!

FRANCET MAMAÏ. Why not?

BALTHAZAR. A good many why-

not's. In the first place, I think your Frédéri is very young; and you are too much in a hurry to marry him.

FRANCET MAMAÏ. Bless the man! why it is he who is in a hurry, not we. Don't I tell you that he is mad about his Arles girl? For the last three months that they have been keeping company he can't sleep, and he doesn't eat. It is a sort of fever of love that has seized him for that woman. Well, what of it? The lad's twenty; he feels his years, and longs to make the most of them.

BALTHAZAR (*shaking his fife*). Then, if you had to marry him, you ought to have found him some good housewife in the neighborhood, clever at her needle, knowing and capable, who understands a laundry and can manage an olive-

press, — a regular peasant-woman in short.

FRANCET MAMAÏ. Yes, certainly, a girl from about here would have been better.

BALTHAZAR. That 's the kind of game that is never wanting, thank God, at the Mouths of the Rhone. Now, see here, without looking further, there 's Rose's goddaughter, Vivette Renaud, whom I saw trotting about here during harvest, — there 's a wife such as he ought to have.

FRANCET MAMAÏ. Yes, yes, I know; but what is one to do if he will have a town girl?

BALTHAZAR. Ah! that 's the trouble. In our time it was the father who said, " I will ; " nowadays it is the children. You 've brought your boy up to the new fashions, and we shall see what comes of it.

FRANCET MAMAÏ. It is true we have always let the little one have his own way, perhaps more than was reasonable. But whose fault was that? It is fifteen years since the father went, — a sickly, morbid creature; but neither Rose nor I could take his place. A mother and a grandfather are too easy-going to manage lads. And then, you know, when there's only one they are weaker than ever, — for you may say there's only one, because his brother (*motioning to The Innocent*) —

THE INNOCENT (*rattling the keys which he has been polishing with his blouse*). Grandfather, see, don't the keys shine?

FRANCET MAMAÏ (*looking at him tenderly*). Fourteen years old at Candlemas! is n't it pitiable? Yes, yes, my cosset.

BALTHAZAR (*getting up suddenly*). What do you really know about this Arles girl? Are you sure she 's respectable?

FRANCET MAMAÏ. Oh, as for that —

BALTHAZAR (*walking up and down*). You ought to be careful about those hussies of the town; it is n't there as it is with us. Here every one is known; it is all clear as day; whereas in the towns —

FRANCET MAMAÏ. Don't worry; I have taken precautions. My daughter-in-law's brother lives at Arles.

BALTHAZAR. Do you mean Cockswain Marc?

FRANCET MAMAÏ. Exactly. Before making the marriage offer I have written him the name of the young lady, and charged him to go and find out all about her. You

know very well he's wide-awake, he is.

BALTHAZAR (*sneering*). He can't shoot a snipe, for all that.

FRANCET MAMAÏ (*laughing*). I'll admit the worthy fellow has n't the luck of it when he beats up the marshes about here; but all the same he's a clever man, whose tongue does n't fail him when he is talking to the bourgeois. He has been thirty years a seaman at Arles; he knows everybody in the town, and whatever he says —

ROSE MAMAÏ (*in the farmhouse*). Hey! grandfather, where's the wine?

FRANCET MAMAÏ. I'm coming; I'm coming, Rose. Give me the keys, quick, my cosset. [*To Rose, who comes out on the steps.*] It is that old Balthazar, who always has such a lot to say. [*To Balthazar*] Hush!

ROSE. What! is the shepherd there, too? The sheep take care of themselves in these days.

BALTHAZAR (*raising his broad-brimmed hat*). The sheep are not out to-day, mistress; the shearers came this morning.

ROSE. So soon!

BALTHAZAR. Why, yes; this is the first of May. I shall be up the mountain in two weeks.

FRANCET MAMAÏ (*opening the cellar door*). Hey, hey! perhaps he 'll have to put off his going this year; is n't that so, Rose?

ROSE. Do hold your tongue, and go and get the muscat. Marc will be here before you 've drawn a single bottle.

FRANCET MAMAÏ. I 'm going. [*Disappears down the cellar stairs.*]

ROSE. Will you take care of the child, Balthazar?

BALTHAZAR (*taking his former seat on the coping*). Yes, yes; you can go, mistress.

SCENE II.

BALTHAZAR; THE INNOCENT.

BALTHAZAR. Poor Innocent! I wonder who would look after him if I were not here. They have no eyes except for the other one.

THE INNOCENT (*impatiently*). Tell me what the wolf did to Monsieur Seguin's goat.

BALTHAZAR. Bless me! I never finished my story, did I? Let me see — where was I?

THE INNOCENT. You were saying: "And then — "

BALTHAZAR. The devil! there are so many "and then's" in the story; let me think, — "and then —" "and then — " Ah, I have it! And

then the little goat heard a noise on the leaves behind her. She turned round and saw in the darkness two ears sticking straight up, and two shining eyes. It was the wolf.

THE INNOCENT (*shuddering*). Oh!

BALTHAZAR. Now the wolf knew he was certain to eat her; so he was n't in a hurry. (You understand the planets say that wolves must eat little goats.) But when she turned round, he began to laugh wickedly: "Ha! ha! ha! Monsieur Seguin's goat!" and he licked his big red tongue round his villanous chops. The goat also knew that he was going to eat her; but that did n't prevent her from making a fight for life, like the brave goat of Monsieur Seguin that she was. She fought all night, my child, — all night, I tell you. Then the first speck of daylight came. A cock crowed in the

valley. "At last!" said the little goat, who was only waiting for the dawn to die; then she stretched herself out on the ground with her beautiful white skin all spotted with blood; and the wolf ate her up.

THE INNOCENT. She had better have let him eat her at once; don't you think so?

BALTHAZAR (*smiling*). Just as well. Bless me, that Innocent! how he does get the thread of things!

SCENE III.

The same; VIVETTE.

VIVETTE (*entering from the back with a parcel under her arm, and a basket in her hand*). God keep you, père Balthazar.

BALTHAZAR. Hey! Vivette; where do you come from, little girl, laden like a bee?



... The shepherd
Balthazar...

VIVETTE. From Saint-Louis, by the Rouen boat. Are they all well here? How's my Innocent? [*Stooping to kiss him*] Good-morning.

THE INNOCENT (*bleating*). Maâ! maâ! — that's the goat.

VIVETTE. What does he say?

BALTHAZAR. Hush! I'm telling him a fine story about Monsieur Seguin's goat which fought all night with the wolf.

THE INNOCENT. And the wolf ate her in the morning.

VIVETTE. Ah! that's a new story. I never heard that.

BALTHAZAR. I made it last summer. At night, on the mountain, when I'm watching my flock under the stars, I invent the stories I tell him in winter. Nothing amuses him so much.

THE INNOCENT. Hou! hou! that's the wolf.

VIVETTE (*kneeling down beside him*). What a pity! such a beautiful boy! Can't he be cured?

BALTHAZAR. They say not; but I've an idea he can be; something seems to me to be stirring in that little brain of his, especially of late; just as it does in the cocoon of a silk-worm when the butterfly is getting ready to come out. That child is waking up; I tell you he is waking up.

VIVETTE. It would bring great happiness if such a thing happened.

BALTHAZAR (*musing*). Happiness? that depends. The safeguard of families is to have an Innocent. It is fifteen years since he was born, and in all that time not one of our sheep has been ill, nor any person; and nothing has happened to the vines or the mulberries.

VIVETTE. That's true.

BALTHAZAR. There can't be any mistake about it, it is to that Innocent we owe it all. And if he does wake up, every body about the place must be on their guard. Their planet might change.

THE INNOCENT (*trying to open Vivette's basket*). I'm hungry.

VIVETTE (*laughing*). Faith, when it comes to greediness he is more than three-quarters awake now. Just look at him, the shrewd little monkey! he has nosed out what I've brought him, — a seed-cake from grandmamma Renaud, made expressly for her Innocent.

BALTHAZAR (*with interest*). How's the grandmamma, little one?

VIVETTE. Pretty well for one of her age.

BALTHAZAR. You take good care of her, at any rate.

VIVETTE. Oh, do you think so?

The poor old woman has no one but me.

BALTHAZAR. And when you go out visiting, like to-day, is she left alone?

VIVETTE. I generally take her with me. A month ago when I went to do the olives at Montauban she went too; but she has never been willing to come to Castelet; yet everybody here is very kind to us.

BALTHAZAR. Perhaps it is too far for her.

VIVETTE. Oh! her legs are good still, I can tell you. If you were to see her trotting about! Is it very long since you saw her, père Balthazar?

BALTHAZAR (*with an effort*). Yes, very long.

THE INNOCENT. I'm hungry; give me my cake.

VIVETTE. No, not yet.

THE INNOCENT. Yes, yes, I will have it, or I 'll tell Frédéri.

VIVETTE (*embarrassed*). What do you mean? What can you tell him?

THE INNOCENT. I 'll tell him that I saw you kissing his picture in the big room upstairs.

BALTHAZAR. Well! well! well!

VIVETTE (*as red as a cherry*). Don't believe him.

BALTHAZAR (*laughing*). Did n't I tell you that child was waking up?

SCENE IV.

The same; ROSE MAMAI.

ROSE. No one here yet?

BALTHAZAR. Yes, mistress here 's a visitor.

VIVETTE. Good morning, godmother.

ROSE (*surprised*). Is it you Vivette? What brought you here?

VIVETTE. Why, godmother, I 've come for the silk-worms as I do every year.

ROSE. That's true; I had forgotten all about them. I believe I 've lost my head since morning. Balthazar, look down the road and see if you see them coming. [BALTHAZAR *goes to the gate;* THE INNOCENT *catches up the basket and runs into the tower.*]

VIVETTE. Are you expecting some one, godmother?

ROSE. Well, yes; I am. Frédéri started two hours ago in the carriole to meet his Uncle Marc.

BALTHAZAR (*from the gate*). I don't see any one. [*He observes that The Innocent has disappeared; and he goes to the tower.*]

ROSE. My God! I pray that nothing has happened.

VIVETTE. What should happen? The roads are a little rough, but Frédéri goes over them so often.

ROSE. Oh, that's not it. I'm only afraid that Cockswain Marc may have brought bad news. Perhaps those people down there are not what they ought to be.

VIVETTE. What people?

ROSE. I know him so well, poor boy! If the marriage fell through, now that he has once set his heart on it—

VIVETTE. Is Frédéri going to be married?

THE INNOCENT (*sitting at the edge of the hay loft, under the eaves, eating his seed-cake*). Maâ! Maâ!

ROSE. Merciful heavens! that Innocent up there! Will you come down, you troublesome child?

BALTHAZAR (*in the loft*). Don't be frightened, mistress; I 'm here. [*He picks up the boy and retreats into the loft.*]

ROSE. That hay-loft! it always makes me tremble when I see it open. Just think, if any one were to fall from that height on these flagstones!

VIVETTE. Were you saying, godmother, that Frédéri was going to be married?

ROSE. Yes. — Why how pale you are! You are frightened too, hey!

VIVETTE (*choking*). And who — who is going to marry him?

ROSE. A girl of Arles. The family came over here one Sunday when the oxen were raced, and ever since he has thought of nothing but her.

VIVETTE. The girls of those parts are very handsome, they say.

ROSE. And very coquettish too. But what of that? Men like them better so.

VIVETTE (*much moved*). Then is it all settled?

ROSE. Not quite; the young people have settled it between themselves, but the marriage request is not yet made. All depends on what Cockswain Marc will tell us. You should have seen Frédéri just now when he started to meet his uncle; how his hands trembled as he harnessed the horse. Well, I myself am all stirred up. I do love him so, my Frédéri. His life is so much to mine. Just think, dear, he is more than a child to me. As he gets to be a man, I see his father in him, — the husband I loved so much and lost so early. Well, my son almost gives him back to me as he grows up, — the same manner of

speaking, the same look in his eyes. Oh, Vivette! don't you see?—when I hear my boy going and coming about the farm, it gives me a feeling I couldn't tell you. It seems to me I'm not so widowed. And then, I don't know how it is, but there are so many things between us; our two hearts beat together so exactly! Here, feel mine; see how fast it throbs! Wouldn't you think I was only twenty myself, and that it was my marriage that was being decided?

FRÉDÉRI (*outside*). Mother!

ROSE. There he is!

SCENE V.

The same; FRÉDÉRI; *then* BALTHAZAR *and* THE INNOCENT.

FRÉDÉRI (*running in*). He is here; he is getting out of the car-

riage. Poor man! I've driven so fast he is shaken to pieces.

ROSE (*laughing*). Oh! you naughty boy.

FRÉDÉRI. Why, you see, I was hungering to bring you the good news. Kiss me again.

ROSE. Then you really love her, — that girl?

FRÉDÉRI. Love her!

ROSE. More than you do me?

FRÉDÉRI. Oh, mother! [*Taking her arm*] Come and see my uncle. [*They go toward the back.*]

VIVETTE (*on the front of the stage*). He did not even look at me!

BALTHAZAR (*coming forward with The Innocent*). What's the matter, my dear?

VIVETTE (*taking up her packages*). Oh, nothing, — the heat — the boat — the — Oh! oh! my God!

THE INNOCENT. Don't cry, Vi-

vette. I won't tell anything to Frédéri.

BALTHAZAR. Happiness to one, sorrow for another; that's life.

FRÉDÉRI (*at the back, waving his handkerchief*). Long live Cockswain Marc!

SCENE VI.

The same; COCKSWAIN MARC; *then* FRANCET MAMAI.

COCKSWAIN MARC. In the first place, for one thing, there's no longer a Cockswain Marc. I'm captain of a coasting vessel now, with certificates, diploma, and all the rest of it. Therefore, my lad, if it doesn't rasp your tongue too much, please to call me captain, and [*rubbing his thighs*] drive your carriole a little slower.

FRÉDÉRI. Yes, captain.

COCKSWAIN MARC. All right. [*To Rose.*] How are you, Rose? [*Kisses her and sees Balthazar.*] Why! here's old Father Planet!

BALTHAZAR. Your servant, mariner.

COCKSWAIN MARC. Mariner, indeed! don't I tell you —

FRANCET MAMAÏ (*coming in*). Well, well, what news?

COCKSWAIN MARC. The news, Maître Francet, is that you must don your best flowered jacket and set off to the town at once and make the marriage offer. They are expecting you.

FRANCET MAMAÏ. Then it is all right?

COCKSWAIN MARC. All that is most right. Worthy people, — easy-going, like you and me, — and such cherry cordial!

ROSE. Cherry cordial!

COCKSWAIN MARC. Oh, divine! It was the mother who made it, — a family receipt. I never tasted anything to equal it.

ROSE. Then you went to their house?

COCKSWAIN MARC. Hang it! don't you know that on such an occasion you must n't trust to any one but yourself? [*Pointing to his eyes*] There 's no information so true as that I get through these spy-glasses of mine.

FRANCET MAMAÏ. Then you are quite satisfied?

COCKSWAIN MARC. You may trust me; the father, wife, and daughter are pure gold, like their cordial.

FRANCET MAMAÏ (*to Balthazar, with a triumphant air*). Hey! what did I tell you?

COCKSWAIN MARC. I hope you 'll

now push the matter as fast as you can.

FRÉDÉRI. I should think so, indeed!

COCKSWAIN MARC. As for me, I sha'n't budge from here till the wedding is over. I have put the "Belle Arsène" in dock for fifteen days; and while the fiddles are tuning, I shall have a shot at the snipe — boum! boum!

BALTHAZAR (*in a jeering tone*). You know best, mariner, whether you need any one to carry your game-bag.

COCKSWAIN MARC. Thank you, thank you, père Planet, but I brought my crew with me.

ROSE (*alarmed*). His crew! good heavens!

FRÉDÉRI (*laughing*). Oh! don't be frightened, mother; the captain's crew is not a crowd; here he is.

SCENE VII.

[*The same; an old sailor who enters with a sort of grunt, and bows right and left; he perspires, carries guns, game-bags, and a bundle of marsh hay.*]

COCKSWAIN MARC. That is n't the whole crew. I left the cabin-boy at Arles to superintend the dock. Come on, come on, sailor; you can do the bowing Sunday. You've got my boots and gun?

THE CREW. Yes, cockswain.

COCKSWAIN MARC (*angrily, in a low voice*). Call me captain, animal!

THE CREW. Yes, cock—

COCKSWAIN MARC (*interrupting him*). That will do; take it all into the house. [*The sailor goes into the farmhouse.*] He 's not very bright, but he 's a worthy fellow.

FRANCET MAMAÏ. I say, Rose; the crew looks as if he might be thirsty.

COCKSWAIN MARC. How about the captain? Two hours of pitching about in the sun in that damned carriole! — think of it!

ROSE. Well, let's go in. Grandfather has just been opening a keg of muscat for you, brother.

COCKSWAIN MARC. Capital! the muscat of Castelet, and the young woman's cherry cordial will give you a fine cellar. [*Taking Frédéri by the arm*] Come on, lad; let's drink to your sweetheart. [*Exit all.*]

SCENE VIII.

BALTHAZAR; *then* THE KEEPER.

BALTHAZAR (*alone*). Poor little Vivette! She's under a cloud for

the rest of her life. To love and never tell of it, and suffer. That 's her planet's doing, — just like her grandmother. [*Lights his pipe ; long silence. Raising his head he sees a man, apparently a horse-keeper, standing just within the gateway, — his short whip worn like a shoulder-belt, a jacket over his arm, and a leathern bag at his side.*] Goodness! what does that fellow want?

THE KEEPER (*advancing*). Is this Castelet, shepherd?

BALTHAZAR. It looks to me like it.

KEEPER. Is the master about?

BALTHAZAR (*pointing to the farm-house*). Go in ; they are at table.

KEEPER (*hastily*). No, no; I can't go in; call him out.

BALTHAZAR (*looking at him inquisitively*). Bless me, that 's queer! — [*He calls*] Francet! Francet!

FRANCET MAMAÏ (*on the sill of the door*). What 's the matter?

BALTHAZAR. Come and see; here 's a man who wants to speak to you.

SCENE IX.

The same; FRANCET MAMAÏ

FRANCET MAMAÏ (*hurrying out*). A man! Why does n't he come in? Are you afraid the roof will fall on your head, friend?

KEEPER (*in a low voice*). What I have to say to you is for your ear only, Mâitre Francet.

FRANCET MAMAÏ. You are trembling! Speak! I 'm listening. [*Balthazar is smoking in the corner.*]

KEEPER. They tell me your grandson is to marry a girl of Arles. Is that true? [*A joyous*

noise of laughing and rattling of glasses is heard within.]

FRANCET MAMAÏ. Yes; that 's quite true, my lad. Don't you hear them laughing in there? We are just drinking in honor of the betrothal.

KEEPER. Then listen to me. You are going to give your son to a hussy who has been my mistress for the last two years. The parents know all, and promised I should marry her. But ever since your grandson has courted her, neither they nor the girl will have anything to do with me. I thought after all that had happened between us she could n't be the wife of another man.

FRANCET MAMAÏ. This is a dreadful thing. But, after all, who are you?

KEEPER. My name is Mitifio. I

have charge of the horses down there in the marshes of Pharaman. Your shepherds know me well.

FRANCET MAMAÏ (*lowering his voice*). Is it actually true what you have told me? Take care, young man; sometimes passion or anger —

KEEPER. What I say, I can prove. When we could not see each other she wrote to me. She got back most of her letters, but I kept two. There they are, written by her and signed by her.

FRANCET MAMAÏ. Judgment of Heaven! Why does this thing happen to us?

FRÉDÉRI (*from within*). Grandfather! Grandfather!

KEEPER. It is a base act, is n't it, that I am doing? But that woman is mine; and I mean to keep her mine, no matter by what means.

FRANCET MAMAÏ (*proudly*).

Don't be uneasy; we shall not take her from you. Can I have these letters?

KEEPER. No, you cannot; they are all I have left of her, and [*in a low voice, angrily*] I hold her by them.

FRANCET MAMAÏ. But I need them very much. The lad has a proud heart; merely to read them would — they are just what he needs to cure him.

KEEPER. Well, so be it, then; take them; but give me your word you will return them to me. Your shepherd knows where I am to be found.

FRANCET MAMAÏ. I promise it.

KEEPER. Farewell. [*He turns to leave the courtyard.*]

FRANCET MAMAÏ. Look here, comrade, it is a long way to Pharaman; will you take a glass of muscat?

KEEPER (*with a gloomy look*). No, thank you. I have more grief than thirst [*goes off*].

SCENE X.

FRANCET MAMAÏ; BALTHAZAR (*still seated*).

FRANCET MAMAÏ. Did you hear that?

BALTHAZAR (*gravely*). Woman is like linen; you should n't choose it by candlelight.

FRÉDÉRI (*within*). Do come, grandfather, or we shall drink without you.

FRANCET MAMAÏ. Good Lord! how shall I tell him?

BALTHAZAR (*rising energetically*). Courage, my old man!

SCENE XI.

The same; FRÉDÉRI; *then* EVERYBODY.

FRÉDÉRI (*coming to the door with his glass raised*). Come, grandfather — to the girl of Arles!

FRANCET MAMAÏ. No, no, my son. Put down your glass; the wine would poison you.

FRÉDÉRI. What do you mean?

FRANCET MAMAÏ. I mean that that woman is the vilest of the vile; and out of respect to your mother her name must no longer be uttered here. Read those!

FRÉDÉRI (*looking at the two letters*). Oh! [*He makes a step toward his grandfather.*] Is it true, true? [*Then with a cry of anguish he stumbles to the well-curb and sits down.*]

[*Curtain falls.*]

Second Tableau.

THE SHORES OF THE POND CALLED THE VACARÈS, AT THE MOUTHS OF THE RHONE.

To right, a jungle of tall reeds ; to left, a sheep-cote ; immense lonely horizon. In the foreground a quantity of cut reeds, gathered into sheaves, a reaping-hook lying on them. When the curtain rises the stage is solitary for a moment.



SCENE I.

ROSE; VIVETTE; THE COCKSWAIN MARC *crouching among the reeds on the watch for game.*

VIVETTE (*looking across the plain, shading her eyes with her hand*). Frédéri!

MARC (*lifting his body half out of the reeds, and making frantic gestures*). Hush!

ROSE (*calling*). Frédéri!

MARC. Do hold your tongue,—the devil!

ROSE. Is that you, Marc?

MARC. Yes, it 's I. Hush! don't move! he 's there!

ROSE. Who? Frédéri?

MARC. No, no! a rose flamingo—splendid bird! kept us running all the morning round the Vacarès.

ROSE. Is Frédéri with you?

MARC. No.

THE CREW (*out of sight*). Ahoy!

MARC. Ahoy!

THE CREW. He 's gone!

MARC. Ha! ten thousand millions of billions! It is those cursed women! Never mind, he shall not escape us. Steady, sailor! [*Plunges into the jungle.*]

SCENE II.

ROSE; VIVETTE.

ROSE. You see he was not with his uncle. Where can he have gone?

VIVETTE. Come, godmother, don't worry so; he can't be far. See! here 's a pile of reeds fresh cut. He must have heard the women say they wanted screens for the silk-worms and came out early to reap the reeds.

ROSE. But why did n't he come home to breakfast? he did n't take his wallet with him.

VIVETTE. Probably he has gone on to the Girauds' farm.

ROSE. Do you really think so?

VIVETTE. Yes, really. The Girauds have been asking him a long time.

ROSE. True; I never thought of that. Yes, yes, you are right. No doubt he went to breakfast with the Girauds. I am so glad you thought of it! Wait till I sit down awhile; I 'm quite tired out. [*Sits on a pile of reeds.*]

VIVETTE. Naughty little god-mother to worry herself so! See, your hands are quite cold.

ROSE. How can I help it? Now-adays I 'm always in fear when he is n't by me.

VIVETTE. Fear?

ROSE. Ah! if I were to tell you all that I am thinking! Does no idea ever come into your mind when you see him so melancholy?

VIVETTE. What idea?

ROSE. No, no! better I should say nothing. There are some things we think, and if we speak of them it seems to make them happen.

[*Angrily*] Ah! I wish every dike of the Rhone would burst some fine night, and let the flood sweep away the town of Arles and all the women in it!

VIVETTE. Do you think he still cares for that girl?

ROSE. Cares for her!

VIVETTE. He never speaks of her.

ROSE. He is too proud.

VIVETTE. But if he is proud, how can he still love her, now that he is sure she went with another man?

ROSE. Ah! my girl, if you only knew! He does not love her in the same way as before, but perhaps he loves her more.

VIVETTE. Will nothing tear this woman from his heart?

ROSE. Yes — a wife.

VIVETTE (*much moved*). You think so? Would it be possible?

ROSE. Ah! the woman who would

cure him, my child — ah, how I would love her.

VIVETTE. If that is all that is needed, there are plenty who would ask no better. Why, without looking farther, there 's Giraud's daughter, — where he has probably gone now; she is pretty, and she has been talking about him for a long time. Then there 's the Nougaret girl, — but perhaps she has n't property enough.

ROSE. Oh! as for that!

VIVETTE. Well then, godmother, you must make him choose one or other of them.

ROSE. Yes; but how can I do it? that 's the question. You know what he has grown to be. He hides himself; he won't see any one. No, no; love must go to him and get round him closely before he perceives it, — some one living near

him who loves him enough not to be rebuffed by his gloom, — some kind, good creature, virtuous and brave, — like you, for instance.

VIVETTE. Me? me? — but I don't love him.

ROSE. Little liar!

VIVETTE. Yes, yes, I do love him; I love him enough to bear all the rebuffs and affronts he might put upon me, if I could only cure him of his sorrow. But how could it ever be? The other was so beautiful, they say, and I am so ugly.

ROSE. But, my darling, you are not ugly, only you are sad; and men don't like that. To please them you must laugh and show your teeth, — you've got such pretty ones.

VIVETTE. I might laugh all day, and he wouldn't notice me any more than when I weep. Ah! god-

mother, you, who are so beautiful, and who have been so loved, tell me what a woman must do to make the man she loves look at her, so that her face inspires him with love.

ROSE. Sit down here beside me. I will tell you. In the first place, a woman must think herself beautiful; that 's three-fourths of all beauty. You behave as if you were ashamed of yourself. You hide your prettiness. Your hair, — nobody ever sees it; tie your ribbon farther back. Open your neckerchief a little, like the Arles girls — there, so! Give it a look as if slipping from the shoulder [*arranges it as she talks*].

VIVETTE. You are taking pains for nothing, godmother. I am sure he will never love me.

ROSE. What do you know about

it? Did you ever let him see that you love him? How is he to guess it? I know just what you do. When he is near you tremble and drop your eyes. You should raise them, on the contrary, and put them boldly into his. It is with the eyes that women speak to men.

VIVETTE (*in a low voice*). I should never dare.

ROSE. Come, look up at me. — She 's as pretty as a flower! I wish he could see you now. Ah! a thought strikes me! You might go as far as the Girauds' wall, and come back alone with him beside the pond. At twilight the roads are lonely, — a girl is frightened; they lose the path; they press against each other — ah, good God! what am I telling her? Listen, Vivette! It is a mother who implores you. My child is in danger; you

alone can save him. You love him; you are beautiful — go!

VIVETTE. Ah, godmother! [*Hesitates a moment, then goes hastily out to left.*]

ROSE (*looking after her*). If it were I, how well I should know what to do.

SCENE III.

ROSE; BALTHAZAR; THE INNOCENT.

BALTHAZAR (*going toward the sheep-cote with The Innocent*). Come, my cosset, let's see if there are a few olives left at the bottom of my bag. [*Stops on seeing Rose.*] Have you found him, mistress?

ROSE. No; but I think he has gone to breakfast at the Girauds'.

BALTHAZAR. Like enough.

ROSE (*taking The Innocent by the hand*). Come, it 's time to go home.

THE INNOCENT (*snuggling up to Balthazar*). No, no, no! I don't want to.

BALTHAZAR. Leave him with me, mistress. The flock is close by, near the pond. As soon as it gets dark I 'll send him home with the shepherd's boy.

THE INNOCENT. Yes, yes, Balthazar.

ROSE. He loves you better than he does us, that child.

BALTHAZAR. Whose doing is that, mistress? Innocent as he is, he knows very well that you all neglect him.

ROSE. Neglect him? What do you mean? Does he want for anything? Is n't proper care taken of him?

BALTHAZAR. It is tenderness he wants. He has rights as well as the other. I have often told you so, Rose Mamaï.

ROSE. Too often, shepherd.

BALTHAZAR. This child is the safeguard of your house. You ought to cherish him doubly, — first for himself, and next for the sake of all those here whom he protects.

ROSE. It is a pity you don't wear the tonsure, you preach so well. Good-by, I 'm going home [*makes a few steps, then returns to the child, kisses him frantically, and goes away*].

THE INNOCENT. How she squeezed me!

BALTHAZAR. Poor little lad! It was n't you she kissed.

THE INNOCENT. I 'm hungry, shepherd.

BALTHAZAR (*thoughtful, points to the sheep-cote*). Go in there and find my bag.

THE INNOCENT (*opens the door of*

the shed, screams, and runs back frightened). Aïe!

BALTHAZAR. What is it?

THE INNOCENT. He is there!—Frédéri.

BALTHAZAR. Frédéri?

SCENE IV.

BALTHAZAR; THE INNOCENT; FRÉDÉRI.

BALTHAZAR. What are you doing here?

FRÉDÉRI. Nothing.

BALTHAZAR. Did n't you hear your mother calling you?

FRÉDÉRI. Yes, but I did n't choose to answer. Those women annoy me. Why should they always be spying upon me? I don't want to be meddled with; I wish to be alone.

BALTHAZAR. You are wrong. Solitude is n't good for what is the matter with you.

FRÉDÉRI. Matter with me? nothing is the matter with me.

BALTHAZAR. If that 's so, why do you spend your nights weeping and lamenting?

FRÉDÉRI. Who told you I did?

BALTHAZAR. You know I 'm a wizard. [*While speaking he has gone into the shed and come out again with his bag, which he throws to The Innocent.*] Come, take up your life again.

FRÉDÉRI. Ah! true, true. I am sick; I suffer! when I am alone I weep, I cry out. Just now, in there, I was smothering my head in the straw lest any one should hear me. Shepherd, I implore you, if you are a wizard, give me some herb to eat, —something that will cure what

I feel here, which hurts me so cruelly.

BALTHAZAR. You must work, my son.

FRÉDÉRI. Work! For the last eight days I have done the work of ten laborers; I toil, I wear myself out, but nothing answers.

BALTHAZAR. Then marry at once. The heart of a good woman is the best of all pillows to sleep on —

FRÉDÉRI (*angrily*). There 's no such thing as a good woman. [*Calming himself.*] No, no, that would n't do. I'd better go away. That's best.

BALTHAZAR. Yes, a journey — that 's good too. Look here, I shall be going up the mountain in a few days; come with me; you shall see how good life is up there. The hills are full of springs that gurgle, and flowers tall as trees, and planets, oh, the planets!

FRÉDÉRI. The mountain is not far enough away.

BALTHAZAR. Then go with your uncle to distant seas.

FRÉDÉRI. No, no, the seas are not distant enough.

BALTHAZAR. Where do you want to go, then?

FRÉDÉRI (*striking the ground with his foot*). There, into the earth!

BALTHAZAR. Unhappy lad! and your mother, and your old grandfather, whom you would kill by one blow? Faith! it would be easy enough, if we had only ourselves to think of; we could soon lay off our burdens; but — remember others.

FRÉDÉRI. I suffer so much. Oh! if you did but know!

BALTHAZAR. I do know. I know your suffering, for I have borne it.

FRÉDÉRI. You!

BALTHAZAR. Yes, I — I have

known the torture of saying to myself, "The woman I love, duty forbids me to love." I was twenty years old then. In the house where I worked — it was quite near here, the other side of the Rhone — the wife of the master was handsome; I was seized with a passion for her. Never did we speak of love to each other. Only, when I was alone in the pastures with my sheep she would come and sit near me, and laugh. But one day that woman said to me, "Shepherd, go away, for now I am sure that I love you." And I went away; and I came here, and hired myself out to your grandfather.

FRÉDÉRI. Have you never seen her again?

BALTHAZAR. Never. And yet we were living not far from each other; and I loved her so that after years

and years have fallen on our love, see! the tears are in my eyes as I speak of her. No matter, I am content. I did my duty. Try to do yours?

FRÉDÉRI. Am I not doing it? Did I speak to you of that woman? Have I gone back to her? But sometimes, sometimes the madness of love lays hold of me. I say to myself, "I will go;" and I walk, I walk — till I see the steeples of the town. Never have I gone farther.

BALTHAZAR. Then be brave to the end. Give me those letters.

FRÉDÉRI. What letters?

BALTHAZAR. Those dreadful letters which you read night and day; which inflame your blood, instead of disgusting you with her and calming you, as your grandfather hoped they would.

FRÉDÉRI. Since you know all, tell

me the name of that man, and I will give you the letters.

BALTHAZAR. What good will it do you to know it?

FRÉDÉRI. It is some one in the town, is n't it? some rich man. She writes to him about his horses.

BALTHAZAR. Very likely.

FRÉDÉRI. You won't tell me? then, I shall keep the letters. If the lover wants them he can come and ask me for them. I shall find out then who he is.

BALTHAZAR. Ah! fool, triple fool! [*Sound of horns.*] What are the shepherds calling for, I wonder. [*Looking at the sky.*] They are right! it is getting dusk; we must get the flock in. [*To The Innocent*] Wait for me, little one; I 'll soon be back. [*Goes away.*]

SCENE V.

FRÉDÉRI; THE INNOCENT.

FRÉDÉRI (*sitting on the reeds; The Innocent eating at a little distance*). All lovers receive love-letters; these are mine. [*Takes them out.*] I have never had any others — ah, misery! I know them by heart, but still I read and re-read them forever. They tear me to pieces, — I am dying of them; but that is good — good as if I poisoned myself with some delicious thing.

THE INNOCENT (*rising*). There, I've done. I'm not hungry now.

FRÉDÉRI (*looking at the letters*). What caresses and tears and oaths of love are there! And all that for another! written down! and I read it and know it, and yet I love her! [*Furiously.*] Oh, it is hard, too

hard that contempt cannot kill such love! [*Reads the letters.*]

THE INNOCENT (*coming up to his brother and leaning on his shoulder*). Don't read that, it makes you cry.

FRÉDÉRI. How do you know?

THE INNOCENT (*speaking slowly, with effort*). I see you at night, in our room, when you put up your hand to shade the lamp.

FRÉDÉRI. Ah, the shepherd was right when he said you were waking up. I must look out for those little eyes in future.

THE INNOCENT. Do leave those horrid stories, do! I know others a great deal prettier. Shall I tell you some?

FRÉDÉRI. What are they?

THE INNOCENT (*sitting at Frédéri's feet*). Once upon a time there was — Once upon a time — It is queer, I never can remember the beginning

of stories. [*Takes his pretty head in his two hands.*]

FRÉDÉRI (*reading the letters*). "I have given myself to you utterly." Oh, God!

THE INNOCENT. And then — and then — [*Mournfully.*] It does tire me so to try and remember — And then she fought all night, and in the morning the wolf ate her up. [*Lays his head on the reeds and falls asleep.*]

FRÉDÉRI. Well, about your story; can you remember it? Dear little fellow, he has gone to sleep. [*Throws his jacket over the child.*] As for me, I can't sleep; I think too much. It is not my fault; everything about me conspires to remind me of her, and prevent my forgetting her. The last time I saw her it was just such a night as this. The Innocent lay sleeping just as he is now. I was thinking of her and —

SCENE VI.

The same. VIVETTE.

VIVETTE (*seeing Frédéri, stops, speaks in a low voice*). Ah, I have found him at last!

FRÉDÉRI. She came softly behind the mulberries and called me by name.

VIVETTE (*timidly*). Frédéri!

FRÉDÉRI. Her voice is always in my ears.

VIVETTE. He does not hear me! [*Stoops and gathers some wild-flowers.*]

FRÉDÉRI. For mischief I would not turn and look at her. Then, to let me know she was there, she shook the mulberry trees, laughing with all her might. But I sat still without moving, listening to her pretty laugh as the leaves fell on my head.

VIVETTE (*approaching from behind*

and flinging a handful of flowers at him). Ah! ah! ah! ah!

FRÉDÉRI (*wildly*). Who is there? [*Turns round.*] Oh, you! — how you hurt me!

VIVETTE. I hurt you?

FRÉDÉRI. What do you mean by that laugh, that intolerable laugh?

VIVETTE (*much overcome*). I meant — I mean — It was because I love you, and they told me that to please men we ought to laugh. [*Silence.*]

FRÉDÉRI (*stupefied*). You love me?

VIVETTE. Oh, a long while now — since I was little.

FRÉDÉRI. Poor child! how I pity you!

VIVETTE (*with her eyes lowered*). Do you remember when Grandmother Renaud used to take us to gather gall-nuts over by Montmajour? I loved you then in those



. . . Vivette, approaching from behind and flinging a handful of flowers at him . . .

days; and when our fingers met among the leaves of the dwarf-oaks I trembled all over. That's ten years ago! so you may think how — [*Silence.*]

FRÉDÉRI. It is a great misfortune that such a love has happened to you, Vivette; I don't love you.

VIVETTE. Oh, I know that very well, and not to-day only. In those very days I tell you of you began not to like me. When I gave you anything you always gave it to others.

FRÉDÉRI. Then what do you expect of me now, — since you know that I do not love you and never shall love you?

VIVETTE. Yes, that's what I told your mother — you will never love me. But listen, it is not my fault, it was your mother who wished me to come.

FRÉDÉRI. That 's what you were plotting together just now, was it?

VIVETTE. She loves you so, your poor mother! She is so unhappy when you suffer. She thought it would do you good to have a friendship for some one else, and that 's why she sent me to you. If it had n't been for her I should never have come. I could n't beg for love — no, what I have is enough for me. To come here two or three times a year, to think of it beforehand, and longer still when I go back, to hear you, to be beside you — I wanted nothing more. Oh! you don't know how my heart beats when I come here at seeing just the outside of your door. [*Movement on Frédéri's part.*] And now, how unfortunate I am! These joys, which I made out of nothing but which filled my life, I am forced to lose

now, — for it is all over; after what I have said to you I can never face you again. I must go away and never come back any more.

FRÉDÉRI. Yes, you are right; that's best.

VIVETTE. Only, before I go let me ask one thing, one last thing, of you. The harm that a woman has done can only be healed by another woman. Find another girl to love you, and don't despair of loving her. Remember what double grief it would be to me to be away from you and yet to say to myself, "He is not happy." Oh! my Frédéri, I pray you on my knees, don't let yourself die for that woman. There are others. They are not all ugly like me. I know some that are handsome enough; will you let me tell you about them?

FRÉDÉRI. Nothing was wanting

to my misery but just such persecution. No! neither you, nor others, handsome or ugly — I won't have them at any price. Tell that to my mother. Tell her she is not to send me any more. In the first place, I have a horror of them. They are all the same — a lie, a lie, a lie! And you, who are there on your knees, begging me to love you, who tell me you have had no other lover to come here with your letters, you —

VIVETTE (*stretching up her arms to him*). Frédéri!

FRÉDÉRI (*with a sob*). Ah! you see I am mad; you had better let me alone. [*Rushes away.*]

SCENE VII.

VIVETTE; THE INNOCENT; *then* ROSE.
It is dusk.

VIVETTE (*on her knees, sobbing*). My God! my God!

THE INNOCENT (*terrified*). Vivette!

ROSE. What is happening? Who is crying?

VIVETTE. Ah, godmother!

ROSE. Is it you? Where is Frédéri?

VIVETTE. I told you he would never love me. Oh! if you only knew what he said to me,—what dreadful words!

ROSE. But where is he?

VIVETTE. He has just gone—that way, running like a madman. [*A shot is heard in the direction to which Vivette points.*]

BOTH WOMEN. Ah! [*They stand petrified, pale.*]

MARC (*among the reeds*). Ahoy!

THE CREW. Missed him!

VIVETTE. Oh, how frightened I was!

ROSE. Frightened, were you? You are thinking what I think — No, no! it is impossible. But I must do something to save him; I cannot live like this. Come.

[*Curtain falls.*]

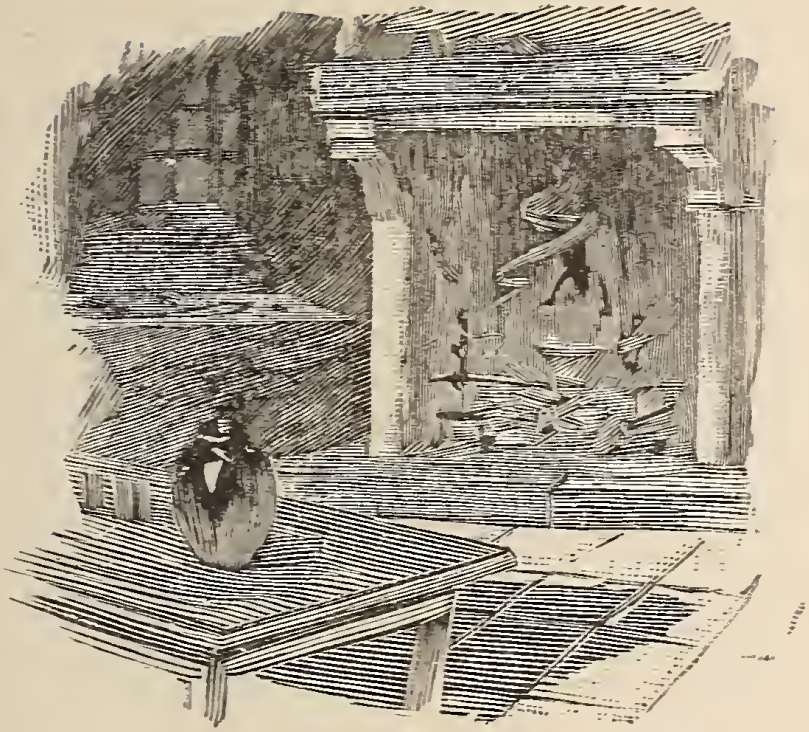


Third Tableau.

THE KITCHEN AT CASTELET.

To right, in the angle, a large fireplace with a tall mantelpiece. To left, a long table and bench of oak, chests, etc.; doors leading into the house.

It is just dawn.



SCENE I.

COCKSWAIN MARC; THE CREW.

[*The cockswain is sitting on a chair, bathed in perspiration in the effort to pull on his heavy shooting-boots. The Crew, in full rig, is leaning against a table, fast asleep.*]

MARC. Do you hear me, sailor? Here, at the Mouths of the Rhone, there's nothing like the morning

watch. [*Pulling at his boot.*] Hey! get on! In the daytime one has to flounder through the slime, and pick up one's feet like a blind horse — to kill what, I'd like to know? Not so much as a teal! Ho! Hsse! there! I've got it on. Now at daybreak, on the contrary, the geese and the herons and the widgeons whirl about your head in battalions; and you've only to pull the trigger, — boom! boom! That's worth the trouble, isn't it? What do you say? Hey! ho! why don't you answer, sailor?

THE CREW (*dreaming*). Missed him!

MARC. Missed him! Why, I haven't fired yet. [*Shaking the Crew.*] He's asleep! Wake up, animal.

THE CREW. Yes, cock —

MARC. What's that?

THE CREW (*precipitately*). Yes, captain.

MARC. That's right. Now, let's be off. [*Opens door at the back.*] Here's a nice little north wind that will freshen you up. Ho! ho! I hear the bitterns whistling in the marsh. That's a good sign. [*Just as he steps out, a window is heard to open.*]

ROSE (*above, calls*). Marc!

MARC. Ahoy!

ROSE. Don't go away; I want to speak to you.

MARC. But I 'm off with my gun —

ROSE. I 'll wake grandfather; we 'll be down soon; wait for us. [*Shuts the window.*]

MARC (*re-entering the kitchen, furious*). Hang it! there 's the first watch gone! T-r-r-r — What is she in such a hurry to say? Something about that Arles girl, I 'll be bound.

[*Walks up and down.*] My soul! if this goes on the house won't be bearable. The lad don't open his lips; the grandfather's eyes are red; and the mother makes faces at me — as if it was my fault! [*Stopping in front of the Crew.*] Was it my fault, I ask you?

THE CREW. Yes, captain.

MARC. What do you mean by that? Pay attention to what you say. Could I go and look under the heels of that filly to see if she had lost a shoe or two on the road? Besides, what is it all about? What a fuss for a bit of a love-affair. If all men were like me — God's thunder! I'd like to see the female that could get grappling-iron on me [*nudging the Crew*], — and you too, sailor, you'd be curious to see her, would n't you? [*He laughs; the Crew laughs; and they gaze at each other.*]

SCENE II.

The same; VIVETTE, *carrying packages.*

VIVETTE. Up already, captain?

MARC. Hey! it 's our little friend Vivette. Where are we going at this early hour, and with all those bundles?

VIVETTE. I am carrying my things to the toll-man at the Rhone. I leave by the six-o'clock boat.

MARC. Leave?

VIVETTE. Yes, captain, I must.

MARC. How gayly she says it: "I must." I should think you would be sorry to leave your friends at Castelet.

VIVETTE. Ah! so I am; but there 's a dear old woman down there at Saint-Louis who is lonely,

all by herself, and that thought gives me courage to go. Ah! see here, the fire is not made, and the men's soup is not ready! I remember now; the maid is ill — Quick! quick!

MARC. Should you like me to help you?

VIVETTE. Oh, yes, captain. Here, down there, behind the door, get me two or three bundles of twigs.

MARC (*bringing the wood*). Here! here! [*To the Crew.*] What do you mean by staring at me so?

VIVETTE (*taking the twigs*). Thank you; now it only wants blowing.

MARC. I 'll do that.

VIVETTE. Very well; then I 'll just run down to the river and engage my place.

MARC (*eagerly*). But you 'll come back?

VIVETTE. Oh, of course. I must say good-bye to my godmother. [*Picks up her bundles.*]

MARC. Don't, don't! let 'em be; the Crew will carry them; they are two heavy for you. Here, sailor — hey! what 's the matter? anything surprising? Take those bundles, I tell you.

VIVETTE. I 'll be back soon, captain. [*Goes out, followed by the Crew.*]

SCENE III.

COCKSWAIN MARC *alone.*

If that girl goes away, a cheerful set we shall be! She was the only gay and lively thing in the house — and such pretty ways! so kindly to every one; always giving you your proper title: "yes, captain; no,

captain"—she never once missed it. Hey! hey! it wouldn't be so unpleasant to see a pretty little partridge of a girl like that hopping about the deck of the "Belle Arsène." Bless us and preserve us! what has got into me? Can it be that I— Why, there must be some infection about this house. I do believe that Arles girl has flipped her fire into everybody! [*Blows the fire savagely.*]

SCENE IV.

COCKSWAIN MARC; BALTHAZAR.

BALTHAZAR (*leaning on the table and watching Marc*). Fine weather for the snipe, mariner.

MARC (*taken unawares and annoyed*). Ah! is that you? [*Flings down the bellows.*]

BALTHAZAR. The sky is black with game over there by Giraud's.

MARC (*jumping up*). Don't speak of it; I am furious. They have made me miss my best chance.

BALTHAZAR. Is it to cool your temper that you are — [*Nodding at the bellows.*] You need n't have put your boots on for that. [*Laughs.*]

MARC. Very well, very well, you old bundle of spite! [*Aside.*] He 's always mousing round, that fellow. [*Seeing the shepherd settle himself in the chimney-corner and light his pipe.*] I say, are you summoned too?

BALTHAZAR (*in the chimney-corner*). Summoned?

MARC. Yes, summoned. It seems there is to be a grand family council this morning. I don't know what 's happening. Some new fuss. Hush! here they come.

SCENE V.

The same; ROSE; FRANCET MAMAÏ.

ROSE. Come in, grandfather.

MARC. What 's all this about?

ROSE. Shut the door.

MARC. Oh! oh! seems to be serious.

ROSE. Very serious. [*Seeing Balthazar.*] You here?

BALTHAZAR. Am I in the way, mistress?

ROSE. The fact is, no; you can stay. What I have to say to them, you know as well as we do. It is a dreadful thing about which we are all thinking, though none of us dare speak of it. But now we *must;* time presses; we must have a thorough explanation.

MARC. I 'll bet it is about your son.

ROSE. Yes, Marc, you are right; it is about my son, who is in danger of death; it is high time we should talk of it.

FRANCET MAMAÏ. What can you mean?

ROSE. I mean that our boy is likely to die, grandfather; and I ask you if we ought to stand by and see him die, and do nothing.

MARC. But what is the matter with him?

ROSE. He has not the strength to renounce that girl of Arles; the struggle exhausts him; love is killing him.

MARC. That does n't tell us what he 's dying of. People die of pleurisy, or of the tackle falling on their heads when the ship lurches; but how the devil should a lad of twenty, riding at his anchors, go to the bottom for a love-affair?

ROSE. So you think, brother.

MARC (*laughing*). Ha! ha! one has to come to the Mouths-of-the-Rhone to find a superstition like that! [*Friskily.*] Listen, Rose; here's a popular ballad they sang at the Alcazar of Arles last winter. [*Sings.*]

"We don't die of love, happily, happily!
No! we happily don't die of love!"

BALTHAZAR (*from the chimney*). Nothing hums as loud as an empty cask.

MARC. What did you say?

ROSE. Your song lies, Marc. There are lads of twenty who do die for love. And sometimes, when death comes too slow, those who are attacked with this strange disease put an end to their lives to escape it.

FRANCET MAMAÏ. Is it possible, Rose? Do you think the lad —

ROSE. He has death in his eyes, I tell you. Look at him well, and you will see it. As for me, it is eight days now that I have watched him. I sleep in his room, and at night I get up and listen to him. Is that living, for a mother? I tremble all the time; I fear everything about him, the guns, the well, the hayloft — oh, that hayloft, I warn you that I am going to close up the window; the lights of Arles can be seen from it, and every night he goes up there to look at them; it terrifies me. And then the Rhone — oh, that Rhone! I dream of it; and he dreams of it. [*Lowering her voice.*] Yesterday he was an hour near the toll-house looking at the water with his wild eyes. He has no thought left in his mind but that; I am sure of it. If he has not already done it it is only be-

cause I am always there, always behind him, watching, watching. But now I have come to the end of my strength; I feel he will escape me.

FRANCET MAMAÏ. Rose! Rose!

ROSE. Listen to me, Francet. Don't do as Marc does. Don't shrug your shoulders at what I say. I know the lad better than you do; I know what he is capable of. He has his mother's blood, and I — if they had not given me the man I wanted I know very well what I should have done.

FRANCET MAMAÏ. But how can we help it? We can't marry him to that — that —

ROSE. Why not?

FRANCET MAMAÏ. How can you even think of it, daughter?

COCKSWAIN MARC. God's thunder!

FRANCET MAMAÏ. I am only a peasant, Rose, but I cling to the honor of my name and of my family as though I were the lord of Caderousse or Barbantane. That girl of Arles here, — in my home! Oh, fie!

ROSE. Upon my word, I admire the way you both talk to me of your honor. Who am I to be taught honor? [*Approaching Francet.*] I have been twenty years your daughter, Maître Francet; did you ever hear a word of blame laid at my door? Could you find in all the country round a woman more virtuous, more faithful to her duty? I am obliged to say this to you since none of you seem to think of it. Did not my man when he was dying bear witness in your presence to my honor and loyalty? And if I — I consent to admit this hussy

to my house, to give her my son, that morsel of myself, and call her "daughter" — ha! do you think it less hard for me than for you? And yet I am ready to do it, for it is the only means of saving his life.

FRANCET MAMAÏ. Have pity upon me, daughter; you crush me!

ROSE. Oh, my father! I implore you, think of your Frédéri. You have already lost your son; this is your grandson, twice your son — you will not let him die again?

FRANCET MAMAÏ. But I should die of such a marriage.

ROSE. Let us all die; what matters it, if the child lives.

FRANCET MAMAÏ. That I should live, oh, my God! to see this thing!

BALTHAZAR (*rising suddenly*). I know one who will not stay to see it. What! here, in Castelet, a strumpet who has roamed with all

the jockeys of the province! [*Flings down his cloak and cudgel.*] There's my cape and my stick, Maître Francet. Pay me my wages and let me go.

FRANCET MAMAÏ (*imploringly*). Balthazar, for the lad's sake! Think! I have none left but him.

ROSE. No, let him go. He has been too long at our fireside — that servant!

BALTHAZAR. Ah! there's good reason to say that a thousand sheep without a shepherd are a poor flock. What this house has long wanted is a man to guide it. There are women, children, old men; but the master is lacking.

ROSE. Answer me truly, shepherd. Do you think that the lad is likely to kill himself if we do not give him that girl?

BALTHAZAR. I do think so.

ROSE. And you would rather see him die?

BALTHAZAR. A hundred times!

ROSE. Go your ways, you wretch, go! wizard of evil! [*Springs upon him.*]

FRANCET MAMAÏ (*interposing*). Let him alone, Rose. Balthazar comes of sterner times than yours, when honor was held above all else. I, too, I date from those times, but I am no more worthy of them. Come, I will pay your wages, shepherd, and you can go.

BALTHAZAR. Wait, the lad is coming down; I am curious to see how you will tell him this. Frédéri, Frédéri! your grandfather wants you.

SCENE VI.

The same; FRÉDÉRI.

FRÉDÉRI. Why! everybody here at this time of day! What is happening? Is anything the matter?

ROSE. What is the matter with you, unhappy boy? Why are you so pale, so feverish? Here, grandfather, look at him; he is but the shadow of himself.

FRANCET MAMAÏ. Yes, he has changed indeed.

FRÉDÉRI (*smiling pallidly*). Pooh! I 'm only a wilted shoot — it is nothing, nothing; a little fever; it will all pass off. Did you wish to speak to me, grandfather?

FRANCET MAMAÏ. Yes, my child, I wanted to say to you — I — you — [*In a low voice to Rose.*] Tell him yourself, Rose, I cannot.

ROSE. Listen, my child; we all know that you have a great sorrow, about which you will not speak to us. You suffer, you are wretched. It is all on account of that woman, is it not?

FRÉDÉRI. Take care, mother; you promised me that her name should never be said in my hearing.

ROSE (*explosively*). I must, because you are dying of her — because you mean to die of her. Oh! don't try to deceive me. I know it; you think there is but one way to tear that passion from your heart, and that is, to leave this world with her. Well, then, my son, you shall not die. Such as she is, that cursèd girl, take her; we give her to you.

FRÉDÉRI. Is it possible? Mother! But you cannot mean it. You know what that woman is.

ROSE. But if you love her —

FRÉDÉRI (*strongly moved*). Then



. . . Will you be to me that
woman, Vivette? . . .

it is true, my mother, that you consent? And you, grandfather, what do you say? You blush, you hang your head. Ah! poor man, what it must cost you! You must all love me well indeed to make me such a sacrifice! Well, then, no! — a thousand times, no! I do not accept it. Raise your heads, my friends, and look at me without shame. The woman to whom I give your name shall be worthy to bear it; I swear it to you.

SCENE VII.

The same; VIVETTE, *entering at the back.*

VIVETTE (*stopping timidly*). Excuse me; am I disturbing you?

FRÉDÉRI (*going up to her*). No — stay, stay. What do you say, grandfather? I think you will feel no shame in calling this one daughter.

ALL. Vivette!

VIVETTE. Me?

FRÉDÉRI (*to Vivette, supporting her*). You know what you said to me: the harm a woman does none but a woman can cure. Will you be to me that woman, Vivette? May I give you my heart? It is very sick, very sore from the blows it has received; but no matter; I believe if you will take it you can heal it. Will you try? Answer me. [*The mother and grandfather stand speechless, their arms stretched out in supplication.*]

VIVETTE (*hiding her head in Rose's bosom*). Answer him for me, godmother.

BALTHAZAR (*sobbing aloud, and taking Frédéri's head in both hands*). Ah, dear lad, God bless you for all the good that you are doing.

[*Curtain falls.*]

Fourth Tableau.

THE COURTYARD OF CASTELET.

As in the first tableau, but decorated and festive. On each side of the gateway in the background is a May-tree garlanded with flowers. Above the gateway is a gigantic bunch of green wheat, corn-flowers, poppies, larkspur, and batchelor's buttons. Serving-men and chamber-maids in gala dress are coming and going. One of the women is filling her pitcher at the well. Now and then the breeze wafts the sound of a fife and the roll of tambourines into the court-yard.



SCENE I.

BALTHAZAR; SERVING-MEN; CHAMBER-MAIDS.

[*Balthazar enters from the back, hot and dusty.*]

THE SERVING-MAN. Ah! here comes Balthazar.

ONE OF THE MEN. Good morning, old man.

BALTHAZAR. Health to you, young ones. [*Sits down on the well-curb.*]

THE WOMAN (*drawing water*). Goodness! how hot you are, my old shepherd.

BALTHAZAR (*mopping his forehead*). I have come a long way, and the sun is scorching. Give me your pitcher. [*The woman lifts her pitcher and lets him drink.*]

THE WOMAN. How is it possible to get into such a sweat at your time of life?

BALTHAZAR. Pooh! I 'm not as old as you think. It is only that rascal of a sun, to which I am not accustomed. Just think, my dear, it is more than sixty years since I have passed the month of June in the plains. [*The men gather round them.*]

ONE OF THE MEN. That 's true, old man. You are late this year in taking up the flocks.

BALTHAZAR. You may well say that. The creatures don't like it, but how can I help it? I married the father, I married the grandfather, and I couldn't go away without marrying the young one. Luckily, it won't be long to wait now; to-day they publish the banns, first and last; Thursday the presents; Saturday the wedding; and then, hey for the mountain!

THE WOMAN. Don't you ever rest, père Balthazar? Do you expect to drive the flocks to the end of your days!

BALTHAZAR. Do I expect it? of course I do! I have never asked but one thing of the Great Shepherd who is up there; and that is, to let me die on the open Alps, among my flock of a July night when so many of the stars are shining. But I don't trouble myself.

I know I shall go that way; my planet says so. Another drop, my pretty. [*The woman lifts her pitcher to his lips.*]

THE MEN (*looking at each other with a smile*). He thinks his planet says so!

SCENE II.

The same; COCKSWAIN MARC; THE CREW.

[*Marc is in full dress, flowered waistcoat, cap with gold lace, silk cravat, frilled shirt.*]

MARC (*at the top of the steps, to Balthazar, who is drinking*). Hey, there! père Balthazar, take care what you are doing; that 's the kind of drink that goes to a man's head.

BALTHAZAR. Look at his Mightiness, puffed up with pride because he has got a new cap, which shines

like a barber's basin. Why are you not at mass on a day like this, you bad Christian?

MARC (*coming down the steps*). No, thank you; you have to walk too far to go to mass in this land of savages; and as for driving, I remember that carriole too well. [*Looking about him.*] Well, well, you are decked out! If you do all this for the betrothal, what will you do for the marriage?

A SERVING-MAN. This is n't only for the betrothal; to-day is the feast of Saint Éloï, the festival of husbandry.

MARC. Is that why the tambourines are humming?

THE MAN. Why, yes; the fraternity of Saint Éloï are going from farm to farm dancing the farandola; they will be at Castelet this evening.

MARC. The mass must be longer

on Saint Éloï's day than on other Sundays; the company is late in arriving.

THE WOMAN. They have certainly gone round by Saint Louis to pick up Mère Renaud.

MARC. Yes, yes, no doubt; then we shall see that fine old woman here. By the bye, Father Planet, was n't she one of your old flames?

BALTHAZAR. Hold your tongue, mariner.

MARC (*laughing*). Ha! ha! they did say in old Renaud's time that — [*The serving men laugh.*]

BALTHAZAR. Hold you tongue, mariner.

MARC. You and she, as the proverb says, gleaned moon-wheat together.

BALTHAZAR (*rising and speaking in a terrible voice*). Mariner! [*The cockswain recoils, frightened; the*

serving men laugh; Balthazar looks at them all for a moment.] Laugh as much as you choose at this old fool of a Balthazar and his planets, but *that* story — that is sacred! I forbid you to speak of it.

MARC. All right, all right! The devil! nobody meant to vex you.

THE MEN. No, no, père Balthazar, you know that very well. [*They all come round him; he sits down again, trembling.*]

MARC (*to the Crew*). I never saw such a house as this for taking women matters seriously. The old fellow is just like the young one with his Arles girl. Everything seemed to be over with him — no more hope. And yet now —

THE SERVANTS (*running to the gate*). Here they are! here they come!

BALTHAZAR (*much agitated*). My God! [*Goes apart into a corner.*]

SCENE III.

The same; ROSE; FRANCET; FRÉDÉRI; VIVETTE; THE INNOCENT; MÈRE RENAUD.

[*They enter through the gateway, all in full dress, — the women with lace on their heads, the men in flowered jackets. The old woman comes first, leaning on Vivette and Frédéri.*]

MÈRE RENAUD. Do I really see old Castelet once more? Let me stand a moment, children, and look at it.

MARC. Good-day to you, Mère Renaud.

MÈRE RENAUD (*making him a deep curtsey*). Who is that fine gentleman? I do not know him.

ROSE. He is my brother, Mère Renaud.

FRANCET MAMAÏ. Cockswain Marc.

MARC (*whispering to him*). Captain.

MÈRE RENAUD. Your servant, cockswain.

MARC (*furious*). Cockswain! cockswain! They can't have seen my cap.

THE INNOCENT (*clapping his hands*). Oh, what pretty trees Saint Éloï has this year!

MÈRE RENAUD. It gives me pleasure to see the place again. It is so long since — not since your marriage, Francet.

FRÉDÉRI. Do you remember it, grandmother?

MÈRE RENAUD. Indeed I do. Here's the nursery for the silk-worms; those are the cattle-sheds. [*She goes forward and stops by the well.*] Oh, the well! [*Laughs softly.*] Is it possible that wood and stone can stir one's heart like this?

MARC (*in a low voice to the servingmen*). Now you shall see some fun. [*Goes up to the old woman, takes her gently by the arm, and draws her a few steps toward the corner where Balthazar is hiding.*] And here's some one, Mère Renaud; do you recognize him? I think he belonged to your time.

MÈRE RENAUD. Merciful God! it is — is it Balthazar?

BALTHAZAR. God bless you, Renaude! [*He makes a step toward her.*]

MÈRE RENAUD. Oh! — oh, my poor Balthazar! [*They look at each other for a moment, saying nothing. The others respectfully turn aside.*]

MARC (*chuckling*). Ha! ha! the old turtle-doves!

ROSE (*sternly*). Marc!

BALTHAZAR (*in a low voice to the old woman*). It is my fault. I knew

you were coming; I ought not to have stayed.

MÈRE RENAUD. Why so? To keep our oath? It is no longer necessary. God himself is not willing that we should die without seeing each other once more. That is why he has put this love into the hearts of these children. Ah! he owed us this, to reward us for our courage.

BALTHAZAR. Yes, it needed courage. Many a time, leading my flock, I saw the smoke of your chimney which seemed to beckon to me and say: "Come! she is here!"

MÈRE RENAUD. And I, when I heard your dogs, and knew you from afar in your great cape, I needed strength and courage not to run to you. But now our pain is over; we can look into each other's face without a blush. Balthazar!

BALTHAZAR. Renaude!

MÈRE RENAUD. Would you be ashamed to kiss me, old and furrowed as I am by time?

BALTHAZAR. Oh!

MÈRE RENAUD. Then press me close upon your heart, my faithful man. I have owed you the kiss of friendship these fifty years. [*They kiss each other slowly.*]

FRÉDÉRI. Duty is a noble thing! [*Pressing Vivette's arm.*] Vivette, I love you!

VIVETTE. Are you quite sure?

MARC (*coming forward*). Suppose we go into the kitchen, Mère Renaud, and look at the spit which has n't been changed since your day.

FRANCET MAMAÏ. That 's a hint! and he is right. Come, let us go to supper! [*Takes the old woman's arm.*]

ALL. To supper! supper!

MÈRE RENAUD (*looking back*). Balthazar!

ROSE. Come, shepherd.

BALTHAZAR (*much moved*). I will come. [*Every one goes in to left; the scene is solitary for a few moments. It is getting dark.*]

SCENE IV.

FRÉDÉRI; VIVETTE, *coming out together from the house.*

FRÉDÉRI (*leading Vivette to the well*). Vivette, listen to me; look at me. Something is the matter; you are not content.

VIVETTE. Oh, yes, I am, my Frédéri.

FRÉDÉRI. Hush! hush! do not say what is false; something worries you, and spoils the joy of our betrothal. I know what it is; your

patient frightens you; you are not yet sure of him. Well then, be happy; I swear to you I am cured.

VIVETTE (*shaking her head*). Sometimes a man thinks that, and then —

FRÉDÉRI. Do you remember that year when I was so ill? Of all that time of illness I remember but one thing. It is the morning on which they opened my window for the first time. The breeze from the Rhone did smell so sweet that day! I could have told, one by one, the herbs across which it came. And then, I don't know why, the sky seemed clearer than usual; the trees had more leaves; the linnets sang sweeter; I was so well! Just then the doctor came, and he said, looking at me: "He is cured." Well, this instant, as I speak to you, is like that morning, — the same

heaven; the same stilling of my soul; one only desire within me, — to lay my head on your dear shoulder and stay there forever. You must see now that I am cured.

VIVETTE. Then it is true? you really love me?

FRÉDÉRI (*in a low voice*). Yes.

VIVETTE. But the other, — she who did you so much harm, — do you never think of her?

FRÉDÉRI. I think of you only, Vivette.

VIVETTE. Oh! more than —

FRÉDÉRI. On what shall I swear it? You alone are in my heart, I tell you! But do not let us talk of that vile past; for me it exists no longer.

VIVETTE. Then why do you keep the things that remind you of it?

FRÉDÉRI. But — what things? I have kept nothing.

VIVETTE. Those letters that you carry there.

FRÉDÉRI (*astonished*). What, did you know that? Yes, it is true; I kept them too long. It was an evil craving within me to find out that man. But now, see! [*He opens his blouse.*]

VIVETTE. They are not there!

FRÉDÉRI. Balthazar carried them back for me this morning.

VIVETTE. You did that, my Frédéri? Oh, I am happy, happy! [*Falls on his breast.*] If you knew how they have made me suffer, those accursed letters! when you presssd me against your heart and said, "I love you," I could fell them there, beneath your blouse, and I could not believe you.

FRÉDÉRI. You could not believe me, and yet you were willing to be my wife?

VIVETTE (*smiling*). That prevented my believing you, but nothing could prevent my loving you.

FRÉDÉRI. And now, if I say, "I love you," will you believe me?

VIVETTE. Say it, and see.

FRÉDÉRI. Ah, dear woman! [*Presses her to his heart; then, closely locked together, they walk with lingering steps toward the sheds, and disappear for a moment behind them.*]

SCENE V.

MITIFIO, *the horse-keeper; then* BALTHAZAR; *then* FRÉDÉRI *and* VIVETTE.

[*Mitifio comes in hastily, takes some steps in the deserted courtyard, then turns to the door to rap, just as it opens, and Balthazar comes out.*]

BALTHAZAR (*starting back*). You here! What do you want?

MITIFIO. My letters. [*The lovers return round the sheds.*]

BALTHAZAR. Those letters! why, I took them to your father this morning. Have n't you been home?

MITIFIO. No, I have been at Arles for two nights.

BALTHAZAR. You still keep up that affair?

MITIFIO. Yes.

BALTHAZAR. I should have thought that after you showed those letters —

MITIFIO. Women will forgive any baseness if it is done out of love for them.

BALTHAZAR. Then, much good may such love do you, my lad. Here we have done with that folly. The lad is be married in four days; he chooses a virtuous woman this time.

MITIFIO. Ah, he 's a happy fel-

low. It must be a good thing to love openly in sight of God and man, to be proud of the woman you possess, and be able to say to all you meet, "That 's my wife, look at her!" As for me I go in at night like a thief. In the daytime I hide myself, or I prowl about to watch her. Then when we meet and are alone, it is nothing but scenes, reproaches, quarrels: "Where have you been?" "What have you been doing?" "Who was that man I saw you with?" Many a time in the midst of our caresses I long to strangle her that she may not trick me again. [*The lovers, still interlaced, cross the courtyard in the background.*] Ah! the horrible life of lies and treachery and distrust. But I am going to make an end of it now; we are to live together, and sorrow to her if she —

BALTHAZAR. Are you going to marry her?

MITIFIO. No, carry her off. If you are at the sheep-cotes to-night you 'll hear a fine gallopade across the plain. I shall have the girl across my saddle, and I warrant you I 'll hold her tight.

BALTHAZAR. Then she loves you, the cursèd thing?

FRÉDÉRI (*stopping short at the back*). Oh!

MITIFIO. Yes; I 'm her fancy for the moment. And to be violently carried off just suits her. To ride along the roads hap-hazard, and go from inn to inn, — the change, the fear, the excitement, — that 's what she loves above all. She is like those sea-birds that never sing unless it storms.

FRÉDÉRI (*in a low voice, furiously*). It is he! — at last!

VIVETTE. Frédéri, come away, come; don't stay here.

FRÉDÉRI (*pushing her away*). Leave me.

VIVETTE (*weeping*). Ah! he loves her still. Frédéri!

FRÉDÉRI. Go away, I tell you — go away! [*He pushes her into the house, but returns himself.*]

MITIFIO. As for me, I 'm half afraid of this trip. I think of my old parents I leave behind, and about the horses, and the old home, and the life of an honest man, which I might have led down there if I had never seen that woman.

BALTHAZAR. Then why do you go? Renounce her, and marry some one else.

MITIFIO. I cannot. She is so beautiful!

FRÉDÉRI (*rushing forward*). I know that only too well, you wretch.

Why did you come here to remind me of it? [*Looking at him, with a laugh of rage.*] A peasant! only a peasant like me! [*Rushing at him.*] Ah! my happiness makes you envious, and you come from her arms to tell me so, with her kisses on your lips! Don't you know that for one of those moments of passion of which you tell, for one minute of the life you have with her, I would give every second of my own, — all my paradise for one hour of your purgatory! Cursèd may you be for coming here, bringer of evil! it is worse than seeing her, herself! you have brought with her breath the horrible love of which I almost died. All is over now; I am lost, lost! While you are roaming the country with that woman there will be weeping and wailing women here — But no; it is not possible! it never shall



... Come, defend yourself, robber! defend yourself, that I may kill you ...

be! [*Springing to one of the great hammers used in putting up the decorations.*] Come, defend yourself, robber! defend yourself, that I may kill you, for I will not die alone! [*Mitifio retreats; the whole scene is covered by the noise of the tambourines, which are coming nearer and nearer.*]

BALTHAZAR (*flinging himself on Frédéri*). Unhappy boy, what are you doing?

FRÉDÉRI (*struggling to get free*). No, let me alone; him first — the girl afterwards. [*Just as he reaches Mitifio Rose rushes between them. Frédéri stops, staggers; the hammer falls from his hand. At the same moment the torches glare upon the farmhouse, the fraternity swarm into the courtyard, dancing the farandola, and shouting, "Saint Éloï! Saint Éloï!"*]

THE DANCERS. Saint Éloï! Saint Éloï!

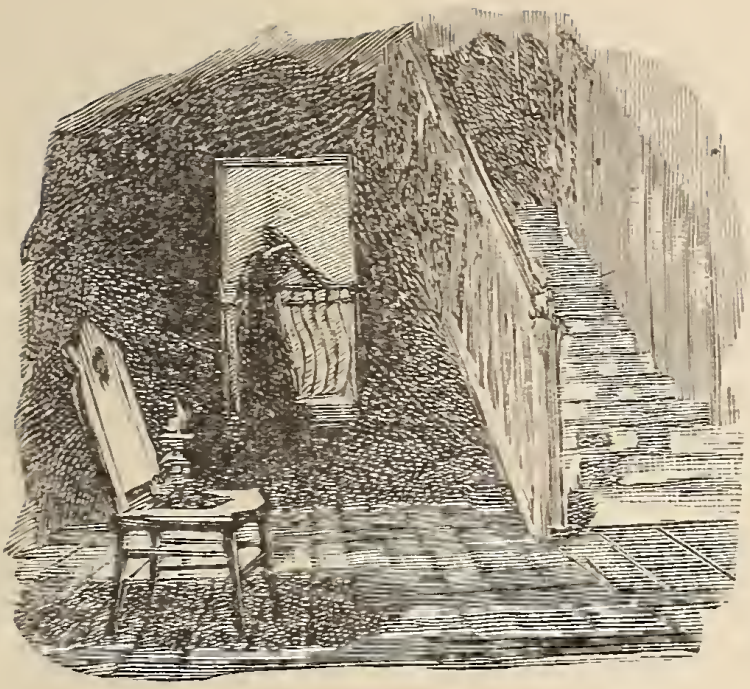
THE FARM SERVANTS (*appearing on the steps*). Saint Éloï! Saint Éloï!
[*Songs and dances.*]

[*Curtain falls.*]

Fifth Tableau.

THE SILK-WORM NURSERY.

A LARGE room, with a long window and a balcony in the background; to left, on second floor, the entrance to the silk-worm nursery; on first floor, the children's room; to right, a wooden staircase, leading to the loft. Under the staircase, a bed, half-hidden by the curtains. When the curtain rises, the stage is empty. In the courtyard of Castelet are heard the fifes and the tambourines of the farm-servants; then they sing the "Kings' March." At this moment Rose enters, with a small lamp in her hand. She puts down the lamp, goes upon the balcony in the background, remains there a moment to watch the dancing, and then returns.



SCENE I.

ROSE MAMAÏ, *alone.*

They are singing below. They little know! The shepherd himself is misled by seeing him dance so gayly: "It will be nothing, mistress, nothing but the last clap of thunder when the storm is over." God grant he may be right! But I am sore afraid; I must still keep watch.

SCENE II.

ROSE, FRÉDÉRI.

FRÉDÉRI (*stopping short when he sees his mother*). What are you doing there? I thought you had gone to bed long ago.

ROSE (*a little embarrassed*). Why, yes; but I have some silk-worms over there that are coming out of the cocoon and I must see about them. But you, my boy, why don't you stay below and sing with the rest?

FRÉDÉRI. I am too tired.

ROSE. You danced that farandola so violently; and Vivette, too, danced all the time. She is a bird, that child; she did n't touch the ground. Did you see how that eldest Giraud twirled her round? She is so taking! Ah! you 'll make a pretty pair, you two.

FRÉDÉRI (*hastily*). Good-night; I am going to bed. [*Kisses her.*]

ROSE (*retaining him*). But listen; if this one does not suit you you must tell me. We can easily find you another.

FRÉDÉRI. Oh, mother!

ROSE. Well, what of it? It is not the girl's happiness I am thinking of, it is yours; you don't look like a happy man, my Frédéri.

FRÉDÉRI. Yes, yes, I am.

ROSE. Come, look me in the face. [*Takes his hand*] One would think you had a fever.

FRÉDÉRI. So I have, the fever of Saint Éloï, which makes a fellow dance and drink. [*Frees his hand.*]

ROSE (*aside*). I can't make him out. [*Catching his hand again.*] Don't go, you are always leaving me.

FRÉDÉRI (*smiling*). Well, well; what is it now?

ROSE (*looking straight at him*). Tell me — that man who came just now —

FRÉDÉRI (*averting his eyes*). What man?

ROSE. You know, — that Bohemian sort of fellow, the horse-keeper. It hurt you to see him, did n't it?

FRÉDÉRI. Pooh! only for a moment — a bit of folly; besides, I do beg of you, don't make me talk of those things. I 'm afraid of soiling you, if I stir up all that mud before you.

ROSE. Nonsense! Have n't mothers a right to go everywhere without getting smirched, — yes, and to ask everything and know everything? Come, speak to me, my child. Open your heart to me. I know, if you

would only say one word to me, that I could say many to help you — won't you?

FRÉDÉRI (*gently and sadly*). No; I implore you; let it all rest.

ROSE. Well, then; let us go down.

FRÉDÉRI. Go down! why?

ROSE. Ah! perhaps I am crazy, but I see danger in your eyes this night. I will not let you be alone. Come, come to the lights! come! Every year at Saint Éloï's fête, you have given me a turn at the farandola. Come, come, I long to dance [*with a sob*], and I long to weep, too.

FRÉDÉRI. Mother, mother! I love you; don't weep! Ah, don't weep! Oh, my God!

ROSE. Then, if you love me, speak to me.

FRÉDÉRI. But what do you want me to say? Well, yes, I have had

a bad day. It was to be expected. After such shocks a man cannot be at peace all at once. Look at the Rhone on the days when the mistral blows; is n't it tossed about, hither and thither, after the wind goes down? You must give time for such feelings to calm themselves. Don't cry, mother; it will all be nothing. One good night's sleep with clenched fists, and there will be nothing left of it. I am thinking only of how to forget — how to be happy.

ROSE (*gravely*). Is that really what you are thinking of?

FRÉDÉRI (*averting his head*). Yes.

ROSE (*gazing into the depths of his eyes*). Truly?

FRÉDÉRI. Truly.

ROSE (*sadly*). It is well, then.

FRÉDÉRI (*kissing her*). Good-night; I am going to bed. [*She*

follows him with a long look and a smile to the door of the room. The door is hardly closed before the mother's face changes and becomes terrible.]

SCENE III.

ROSE, *alone.*

To be a mother is hell! That child! I almost died when I brought him into the world. After that he was ill long. At fifteen he had another dreadful illness, but I brought him through them all as by a miracle. What I suffered, my sleepless nights, the wrinkles on my face can tell. And now that I have made him a man, now that he is strong and beautiful and pure, he thinks of nothing but of tearing himself from the life I gave him.

To save him from himself I watch him as I did when he was little! Ah! truly, there are times when God is not reasonable. [*Sits down on a stool.*] But your life is mine, thankless boy! I gave it to you, I have given it to you twenty times. Day by day it has been taken, it has been made, out of my life; don't you know that it cost my whole youth to make your twenty years? And now you mean to destroy my work! Oh! oh! how ungrateful children are! [*Softening down and sadly.*] Yet even I, when my man died and held my hands as he left me, I longed to follow him. But you were there; you could not understand what was happening, but you cried, you were frightened. Ah! at that first cry I felt my life did not belong to me; I had no right to take it. Then I clasped you in my

arms, I smiled to you, I sang you to sleep, my heart was big with tears. I was widowed forever, and yet, as soon as I could, I took off my black garments not to sadden your baby eyes. [*With a sob.*] What I did for him, he might now do for me. Oh, poor mothers! how much to be pitied! We give all, and nothing is returned to us. We are the loving women who are always deserted. Yet we never deceive ourselves, we mothers; we know how to bear desertion.

CHORUS OF SINGERS (*without*).

Upon a car
Gilded for war,
Three kings are seen, grave as the angels;
Upon a car
Gilded for war,
Three kings erect among the standards.

[*Tambourines and dances.*]

ROSE. What a night! what a vigil! [*The door of the room is opened hastily.*] Who is there?

SCENE IV

ROSE; THE INNOCENT.

[*The Innocent enters from a chamber to the left, with bare feet, his fair hair tangled, no clothes but a pair of fustian trousers held up by braces. His eyes shine; his face has an open, living, unaccustomed look.*]

THE INNOCENT (*approaching his mother with a finger on his lips*). Hush!

ROSE. Oh! is it you? What do you want?

THE INNOCENT (*in a low voice*). Go to bed, mother, and sleep peacefully. Nothing will happen to-night.

ROSE. How do you mean — nothing? do you know —

THE INNOCENT. I know that my brother has a great grief, and you make me sleep in his room for fear he should let his grief kill him. It is many nights now that I have hardly slept. He was getting better; but to-night was dreadful. He wept and talked to himself, and said, "I cannot, I cannot! I must go!" But by and by he lay down, and now he 's asleep, and I have come softly, softly to tell you. Why do you look at me like that, mother? Are you surprised that I can see clearly and have my wits? Don't you remember that Balthazar said, "He is waking up, that boy, he is waking up"?

ROSE. Is it possible? Oh! — oh, my Innocent!

THE INNOCENT. My name is Jean, mother; call me Jean. There is no longer an Innocent in the house.

ROSE. Hush! hush! don't say that.

THE INNOCENT. Why not?

ROSE. Ah, I am mad! It is that shepherd with his tales. Come, my darling, and let me look at you. It seems as though I had never seen you, — as if a new child were given to me. [*Taking him on her knees.*] How tall you have grown! how handsome you are! Do you know that you are like Frédéri? Can it be that the true light is in those eyes at last?

THE INNOCENT. Yes, mother; I believe I have wakened forever now. But I 'm very sleepy; I want to go back to bed. Will you kiss me again, say?

ROSE. Will I? [*Kisses him passionately.*] I owe you many and many kisses. [*Takes him to the door of his room.*] Go and sleep, my darling, go!

SCENE V.

ROSE, *alone.*

No longer an Innocent in the house! Will it bring evil? Ah! what am I saying? I don't deserve this great happiness. No, no! it is not possible; God would not restore to me one child and take away the other. [*Bows her head for a moment before a Madonna inlaid in the wall; then she goes to the door of the bedroom and listens.*] All quiet — they are sleeping. [*Closes the window at the back, puts a few things in place, chairs, etc.; goes into the alcove and draws her curtain. The dawn is beginning to whiten the window-panes at the back.*]

SCENE VI.

FRÉDÉRI; ROSE, *in the alcove.*

FRÉDÉRI (*enters half-dressed, with a wild look; stops and listens*). [*In a low voice.*] Three o'clock. It is daylight. This is like the shepherd's tale — she fought all night, and then, in the morning — in the morning — [*He makes a step toward the staircase, then stops.*] Oh, this is horrible! What a waking they will all have! But I cannot live — it is impossible. I see her, all the time, in the arms of that man! He is carrying her off! he holds her to him! he — Accursed vision, I will tear you from my sight! [*Springs up the stairway.*]

ROSE (*calling*). Frédéri! Is that you? [*Frédéri stops half-way up*



... He is carrying her off!
He holds her to him!...

the staircase, totters, his arms flung out.]

ROSE (*darting from the alcove, runs to the door of her children's room, looks in, and utters a fearful cry*). Ah! [*Turns and sees Frédéri on the stairs.*] What is it? where are you going?

FRÉDÉRI (*beside himself*). Don't you hear them — don't you hear them by the sheepcotes? He is carrying her away. Wait, wait for me. [*Springs up the stairway. Rose rushes after him; when she reaches the door at the head of the stairs Frédéri has locked it. She raps frantically.*]

ROSE. Frédéri, my child! In Heaven's name, open — open — open! My child! take me with you in death. Ah! my God! — Help! help! my son will kill himself! [*Runs down the staircase like a mad*

woman, rushes to the window at the back, opens it, looks out, and falls with an awful cry.]

SCENE VII.

The same; THE INNOCENT; BALTHAZAR; MARC.

THE INNOCENT. Mother! mother! [*Kneels beside her.*]

BALTHAZAR (*seeing the open window, goes to it and looks out into the courtyard*). Ah! [*Turning to Marc, who has entered the room.*] Look out of that window, you, and see whether men do not die for love.

[*Curtain falls.*]

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